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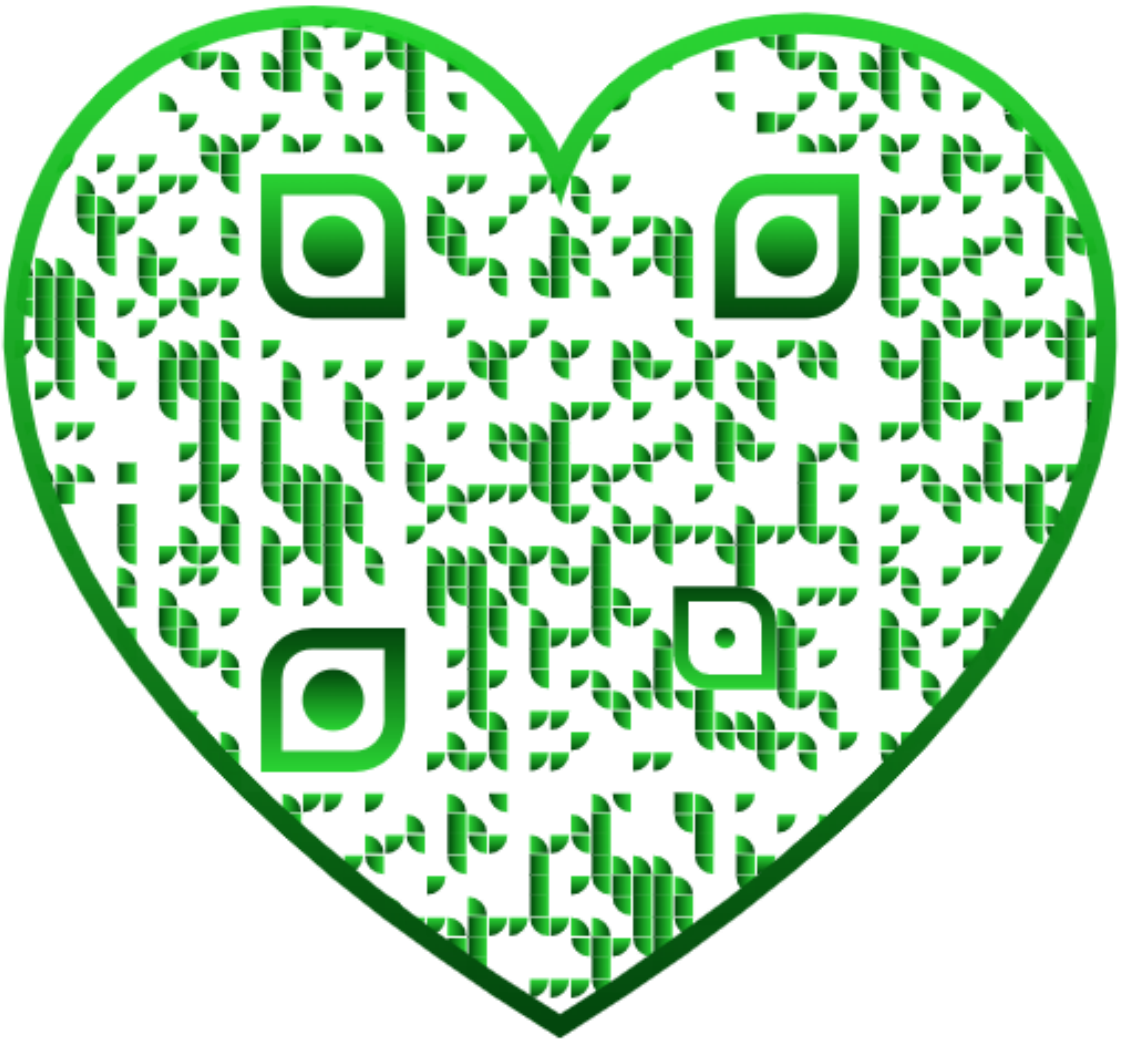

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MARCH 2024

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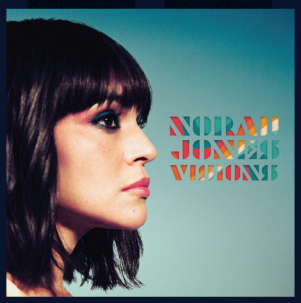

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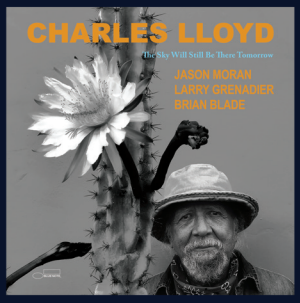

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On Expressing Beauty
BY JOSEF WOODARD
Ambrose Akinmusire has taken a broad approach to music these days. He released *Owl Song*, a subtle trio project. He penned a commission piece, *Isakoso Ara*, for the Monterey Jazz Festival. He's writing musical scores for TV and film. We check in with the gifted trumpeter and composer to see what's next.

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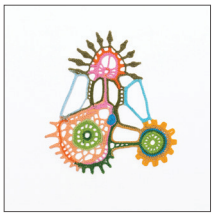

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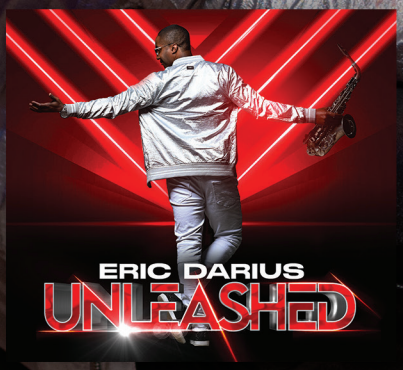

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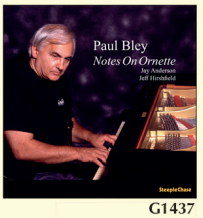

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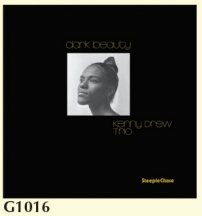

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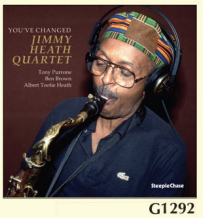

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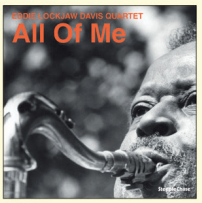

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Terri Lyne Carrington

Humble Beginnings & Possibilities

THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU LISTEN TO jazz musicians reveal the stories behind their lives and careers, and you can't help but drop your jaw and say, "Wow."

Such was the case during a panel discussion at the Jazz Education Network Conference in New Orleans this past January. When JEN co-founder Mary Jo Papich moderated a panel of LeJENds of Jazz (artists and educators who received the organization's top honors this year), an awe-inspiring world of humble beginnings, God-given talent and unlocked potential came into view.

Terri Lyne Carrington, the drummer, composer, educator and change agent who received this year's LeJENd of Jazz Education Award, has been leading a charge for inclusivity in jazz that has dramatically changed the way we think about who should be on the bandstand. As the founder and artistic director of the Berklee College of Music Institute of Jazz and Gender Justice, Carrington said that schools of music need to look beyond the norms sometimes to find students with special voices that just need to be developed. But as a champion of women and non-binary musicians in jazz, she also wants to be careful not to put them in a box.

"I think it's good to start thinking about, because it's easy to silo women," Carrington said about women-specific jazz awards and programs. "[Terms like] 'sisters in jazz' or 'women in jazz' put them in a box sometimes. What is needed in the music is more gender equity, and not like women over here or women over there. … That's the cultural transformation: gender equity."

"The perspective that Terri Lyne shared is priceless," said Oscar Hernandez, leader of the Spanish Harlem Orchestra and recipient of the LeJENd of Latin Jazz award. "Because it's thinking outside the box, in terms of impacting people's lives that would normally not be impacted, on some level.

"I'm originally from the South Bronx. We were a very poor family of 11. And I say — kind of figuratively, but in a sense literally — music saved my life.

"There were dynamics that were happening, especially the cultural revolution of Latinos in the '60s, stemming from the '40s and '50s and the music of Tito Puente, Machito and Tito Rodriguez — the big three — which, from my perspective, is the equivalent of Duke Ellington and Count Basie on its own level."

Hernandez could have been just another overlooked kid, but he found music, and mentors, and somehow made his way to leading one of the world's most renowned Latin jazz bands.

"I feel that there's a spiritual, divine intervention that I can't explain," he said. "Even the fact that I play piano, I can't even explain it. Because we certainly couldn't afford to buy a piano when when I was a kid. That was kind of out of the realm of reality."

The messages delivered by Carrington and Hernandez resonated with vocalist and educator Duane Davis, recipient of the Ellis Marsalis Jr. Jazz Educator of the Year award.

"I had so many people who didn't believe in me, that I had the potential to be a musician," Davis said. "So, when I finished high school, I just worked on the railroad with my father, making more money than he did, because I had typing skills and shorthand skills. I was the first African American hired in the clerical department.

"But during that year, my high school music teacher said, 'You should be in college. You should be in music.' I was always in music, but we didn't have a piano, like Oscar said of his family, and everything I learned, I learned by ear. But she could see deeper in me; she saw possibilities.

"When she saw that, I was so thankful, because I can remember [many years later] sitting in a faculty meeting at the community college, and they were rejecting some students. And tears came to my eyes and I said, 'You cannot reject that student. I was that student. There are possibilities there. We have to find what's going to unlock that kid.'"

That's what jazz is all about. Finding the key.

DB

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Chords & Discords

A Pittsburgh/Philly SNAFU

Only someone from Pittsburgh could get a chuckle from the February 2024 Jazz Venue Guide issue. Chris' Jazz Cafe in Pittsburgh? Haven't been to that one. Maybe because it's the "longest continuously operating club in the history of Philadelphia." Oh, and that would be a 350-mile Uber. And MCG Jazz has been around since 1877? Marty Ashby and his staff will be surprised to hear that. He's only been there since 1987!

Completely tongue-in-cheek. Loved the issue and all the possibilities. You should do an article on some of the NYC clubs lost but not forgotten. The Jazz Standard comes to mind. Sure miss that one.
Regards,

DAN POLJAK
PITTSBURGH (WESTERN!), PENNSYLVANIA

Editor's Note: Oh, boy, Dan, do we have scrapple all over our face. Thank you for the corrections.

Where's the Wisconsin Love?

In your February 2024 edition there is no mention of jazz clubs in Wisconsin. I would like to recommend the following: Bar Centro, Milwaukee; Caroline's Jazz Club, Milwaukee; and, Copper State Brewing in Green Bay has jazz Tuesday evenings 6–9 p.m.

GARY GREIF
VIA EMAIL

Editor's Note: Can we have brats, too?

Editor's Note: Thanks for the question, William. Our philosophy since we started The Hot Box has been to make the assignments ahead of time so that the writers know how much depth they can go into for each review before the first listen. Call it the luck of the draw, but that's been the way we have handled it all these years.

Hitting the Right Field!

This may seem minor, but it might have been the only chance to see my friend's name in your (otherwise great) publication (Delmark 70th Bash, December). The author who helped Billy Boy Arnold with his biography is Kim Field. Not Kim Rice. It's right there on the cover of Billy's book. And he deserves the credit. Kim is a great harmonica player in his own right, who's also written a great book on the instrument's history.

PETE HARRIS
VIA EMAIL

How Do We Choose?

Not sure who this should go to, the reviews editor, perhaps. How do you decide which of the four Hot Box reviewers to spotlight? In the latest issue, *Beauty Is Enough* is given a three-star review, which is the "weakest" of the four. Why would you not give it to one of the two four-star reviewers?

WILLIAM FULLER
VIA EMAIL

Love for Yamamoto

Love DownBeat magazine, especially the music reviews. I have bought most of my jazz by reading the reviews. I always enjoy the next issue, especially the cover stories. Any chance for a nice cover and story on Eri Yamamoto, a great jazz pianist? Keep up the good work!

JOSEPH KUBOVCIK
VIA EMAIL

Dreaming of Critics, Oh, My!

My long-standing dream for all art-form publications is for the Editor to mandate that for each published review, the reviewer must include a brief disclosure of their professional experience, plus artistic likes and dislikes. Having the reviewer's information printed at the beginning of EVERY published review would give the reader a better understanding of a reviewer's perspective while providing the artist with a more relevant and contextually valid appraisal of their art.

STEVE WINTER
VIA EMAIL

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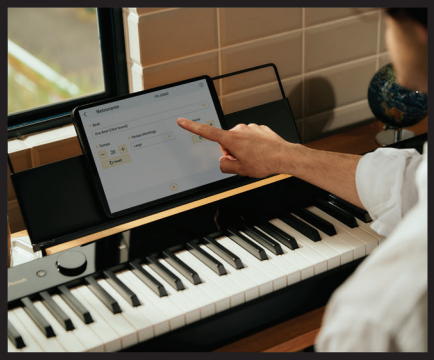

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EVA KAPANADZE

Gerald Cannon pays tribute to two former bosses: McCoy Tyner and Elvin Jones.

Gerald Cannon, Conjuring Spirits

These days, the list of living musicians who've played with any members of John Coltrane's quintessential quartet, a collective that redefined jazz as we know it, is short. Bassist and composer Gerald Cannon played long-term with not one, but two of these legends: drummer Elvin Jones and pianist McCoy Tyner.

"To be one of the few … that has played with both of those guys for a long period of time … feels really good, first of all," said Cannon. "And it added to my development and my still-developing way of playing."

In honor of his unique proximity to Jones and Tyner, and to the indelible imprint they left on his approach to life and music, Cannon released *Live At Dizzy's Club: The Music Of Elvin & McCoy*. The live record, which was recorded over two nights in June 2023 at Dizzy's Club in New York, features Cannon with pianist Dave Kikoski, drummer Lenny White, tenor saxophonist Joe Lovano, alto saxophonist Sherman Irby, trumpeter Eddie Henderson and trombonist Steve Turre. Almost all of them played with Tyner, Jones, or both at some point in their careers. With aplomb, the seven-piece band tackles some of the most iconic songs by Jones and Tyner as well as some surprises.

After spending nearly a decade in each of their respective bands, Cannon is a fitting choice to tribute Jones and Tyner. He came to understand their musical approaches and became close enough to call them friends and mentors. To him, they were both "Chief."

Cannon first heard Elvin Jones at age 13, when his mother gave him the John Coltrane record *Africa/Brass*. He remembers being struck by Jones' approach and Reggie Workman's iconic bass line on "Greensleeves," which he immediately learned on his electric. Many years later, while studying at Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, Cannon eagerly agreed when a schoolmate invited him to see Jones' Jazz Machine perform at Chicago's Jazz Showcase in 1978.

"I had never heard anything like that," said Cannon. "I was sitting right in front of his bass drum. I remember that. Right in front of it. And I had an afro at the time, and it felt like the sound of his bass drum was blowing my afro back."

About 20 years later, after Cannon had moved to New York and worked many years with Roy Hargrove, pianist Eric Lewis recommended Cannon fill in on bass for Jones' upcoming show at the Blue Note. At the end of that week-long stint, Cannon's membership in Jones' band was official. He went on to play with the fiery drummer until

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Jones' death in 2004, a profound period that Cannon says taught him how to stand on his own two feet as a bassist.

"I got a lot stronger," Cannon said. "Because you know, with Elvin, I could never use an amp or a monitor. Just a mic. I really learned how to play my instrument with a whole lot more finesse. And how to get a bigger sound out of my bass without overworking. My overall feel of walking and soloing changed when I started playing with Elvin, because I just felt more free."

As for Tyner, Cannon was first introduced to him by Jones in the early 2000s. After Jones passed away in 2004, Cannon recalls somebody telling him, "'Hey, man, McCoy's looking for you.'"

About a week later, Cannon received a call from Tyner's manager, who asked if he was free for a few dates. That began Cannon's 13-year career in Tyner's band — and another life-altering opportunity. From Tyner, Cannon learned about the spiritual connection vital to jazz, and the two frequently connected over their shared love of visual art, which Cannon also does professionally.

"I'm playing at the Blue Note with McCoy Tyner, we were coming down the stairs, getting ready to do our first set," said Cannon. "I was walking right next to him and he said, 'Hey, Gerald, they call it art.' I said, 'Yes, they do.' And he said, 'So, let's go paint.' I never forgot that."

It's been 20 years since Jones' death, and four since Tyner's. Cannon had been contemplating a tribute album to them for years, noting that he waited to allow for a "strong foundation of reflection." Last year, he felt ready to "paint."

Cannon settled on a live record and called up Dizzy's Club inside Jazz At Lincoln Center, a favorite venue of his that's set up with high-quality recording equipment. From there, he put the band together, choosing musicians who had played with these greats or, in the case of Kikoski, extensively studied them.

"Everyone on the bandstand, outside of Dave Kikoski, they all played with Elvin and McCoy. So they all knew the spirit of those musicians, and I wanted to play with musicians that have felt what I felt," Cannon said, referring to the experience of being on stage with Tyner and Jones.

Last June, the septet went into their nights at Dizzy's Club with only one rehearsal. That was all they needed. On *Live At Dizzy's Club*, the band plays the repertoire with deep facility, respect and joy. Most importantly, each musician shares their own distinctive voice, just as Jones and Tyner would have wanted.

"When I took a solo, the way Elvin would comp behind my solo, you could feel that he's really listening to me and playing with me," Cannon said. "We're having a conversation. Same with McCoy. You know, they're really wanting to hear the authentic person that you are."

EVA KAPANADZE
"As a bass player, I was in total heaven," Cannon says of making Live At Dizzy's.

Cannon set out to create *Live At Dizzy's Club* with that same sense of authenticity at the helm. That's why he decided on a live record, something he's never done as a leader, to capture the spontaneity. Sure enough, there is magic.

Throughout — but particularly on the burning opening track, "EJ's Blues," and Jones' quintessential tune "3 Card Molly" — Cannon plays with that nuanced balance of strength and freedom, as the septet cooks with Jones-level propulsive energy. On the Tyner tunes, like the rousing version of "Contemporary Focus" from Tyner's 1964 recording *Today And Tomorrow*, and the ballad "Search For Peace," led by Lovano's rich melodic interpretation, the band accesses the spiritual depth for which Tyner was known.

One of the most moving songs on the set is the band's tender rendition of Cannon's composition "Three Elders," which Cannon wrote in tribute to Tyner, Jones and another mentor, pianist Larry Willis, and first recorded it on his 2003 debut. On *Live At Dizzy's Club*, Henderson and Lovano share the melody, as the rhythm section gently ebbs beneath. After revisiting this early expression of gratitude to his elders, Cannon says the song means more to him than ever now as all three of his elders have passed.

But Cannon still feels them in his music. He felt Tyner's and Jones' spirits throughout the recording. Their presence was strongest as Cannon walked with White, who masterfully channels Jones' tendency toward long beats and polyrhythms, and as he interplayed with Kikoski's innovative sense of harmony, akin to Tyner's.

"I really felt the spirit — I mean, I felt it on every solo the horns took — but amongst the rhythm section," said Cannon. "As a bass player, I was in total heaven."

—Alexa Peters

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C. ANDREW HOVAN

McCann's gritty, soulful grooves became the source for countless hip-hop samples.

In Memoriam: Les McCann, 1935–2023

LES MCCANN, A JAZZ PIANIST AND VOCAList who helped soul-jazz keep a foothold in mainstream pop music — in the process becoming a seemingly bottomless sampling resource for hip-hop artists — died Dec. 29 at a hospital in Los Angeles. He was 88.

His death was reported by his longtime manager, Alan Abrahams, to NBC News. The cause of death was pneumonia, with which McCann had presented at the hospital a week prior to his passing.

A native of Kentucky, McCann moved after serving in the U.S. Navy to California and built a successful career as a jazz pianist. His real breakthrough, however, came after a decade in music with the 1969 release of "Compared To What," a gospel-charged antiwar song on which McCann played (with tenor saxophonist Eddie Harris) and sang. The million-seller gave McCann a new career momentum, pioneering the use of electronic keyboards in his music while also increasing his profile as a vocalist.

McCann's deep roots in gospel and the blues gave his music a gritty, earthy quality and a large supply of soulful licks. These later proved irresistible to hip-hop DJs and producers: According to the online database WhoSampled, McCann's records have been sampled more than 300 times since the early 1990s. His music has powered the work of artists including Cypress Hill, A Tribe Called Quest, Massive Attack and Logic.

McCann's accessibility and pop success were not the product of A&R or producer pressure, but entirely of his own making, and

it was a style he stuck with even when it fell out of fashion in the 1980s and ’90s.

“I didn’t need to work with anyone trying to tell me what to play,” he emphasized in a 2015 interview with All About Jazz. “All the producer has to do is just back me up. Tell me if you like it or you don’t, but it really doesn’t matter. … To me, my jazz is personal. You can’t mess with my heart. And you can’t mess with my music because my music is my heart.”

Leslie Coleman McCann was born Sept. 23, 1935, in Lexington, Kentucky, to James and Anna McCann. His mother instilled music into her son (and his seven siblings) by singing opera as she worked around the house. His father was also an avid jazz fan, and McCann recalled that he took a few piano lessons when he was 6 years old. After that, however, his childhood music experiences consisted of singing in the church choir and playing tuba in his school marching band.

His interest in music became more serious when he joined the Navy in 1954 and was posted in San Francisco. He taught himself the piano by studying the records of musicians like Erroll Garner, and also became an accomplished enough singer to win a talent contest and appear on TV’s *Ed Sullivan Show* in 1956. After his discharge, McCann stayed in San Francisco, where he worked as a doorman at the famous Blackhawk jazz club, then formed a trio (Les McCann Ltd.) that debuted at the Purple Onion in 1959. The next year, he relocated to Los Angeles, where he signed to Pacific Jazz Records and made his first recording, *Les McCann Ltd. Plays The Truth*, with bassist Leroy Vinnegar and drummer Ron Jefferson.

McCann built a successful career across the 1960s, first on the West Coast, then on the national and international jazz circuits. In 1969 he was invited to perform at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, where his trio joined forces with tenor saxophonist Eddie Harris and trumpeter Benny Bailey. The concert was recorded and released on Atlantic Records as *Swiss Movement*, opening with Eugene McDaniels’ protest song “Compared To What.” The song was a hit on both the pop and R&B charts, propelling its parent album to no. 29 on the Billboard 200 and to Platinum status.

McCann became a jazz star, reuniting with Harris for 1971’s *Second Movement* and recording a successful string of soul-jazz records throughout the 1970s. He put a new emphasis on his vocals (which had only been occasional to that point), but also innovated with clavinet, Moog synthesizer and other electronic instruments.

In 1971 he appeared in the film *Soul to Soul*, a documentary about a gala Independence Day concert in Accra, Ghana, that placed McCann alongside Wilson Pickett, Ike and Tina Turner, and other African American stars. Among these was Roberta Flack, whom McCann had seen performing in Washington, D.C., and recommended to Atlantic, resulting in one of the label’s best-selling artists of the era.

McCann soldiered on with the musical style he loved even as it lost currency in the 1980s and 1990s; by the time he suffered a severe stroke in 1995, most of his income came from royalties for his hip-hop samples. The stroke damaged his dexterity, forcing him to rely increasingly on vocals and less on piano. However, he improved over the next few years and was able to return to live performance to support the release of his 2002 album *Pump It Up*. Occasional recordings appeared afterward, with the last new material issued in 2018.

Never A Dull Moment, a compilation of live recordings McCann made in 1966–’67, was released in December on Resonance Records. *—Michael J. West*

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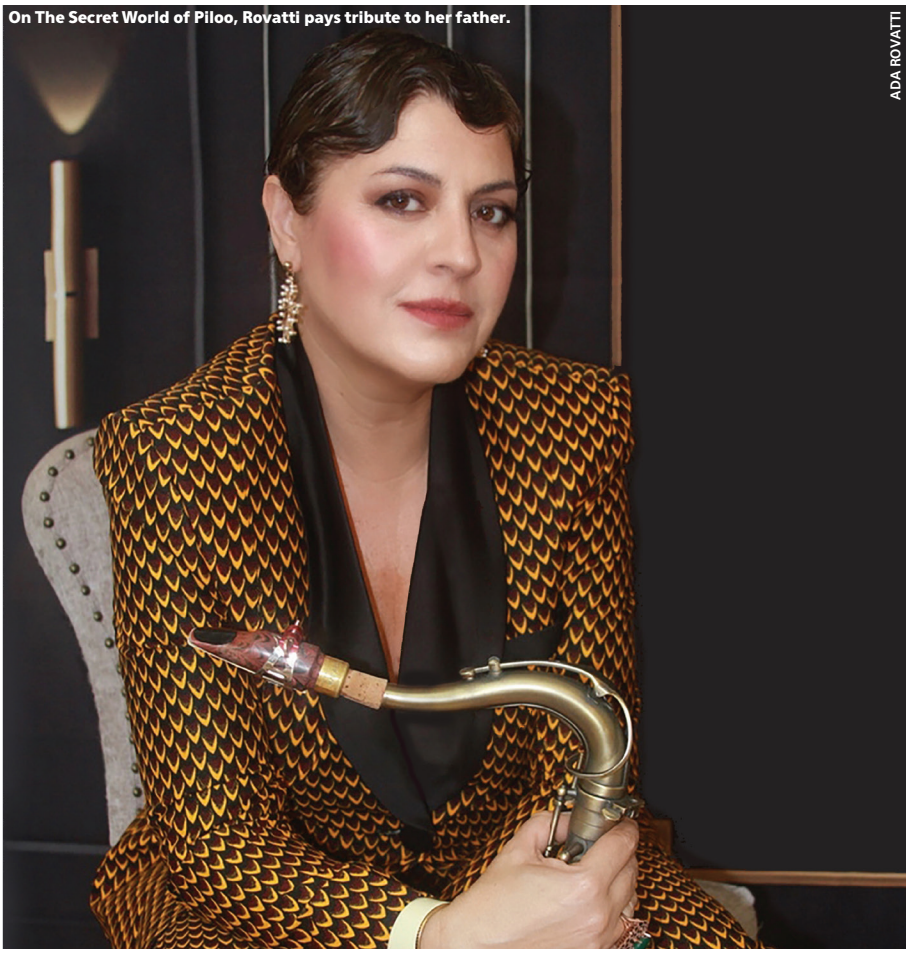
On The Secret World of Piloo, Rovatti pays tribute to her father.

ADA ROVATTI

Saxophonist Ada Rovatti Unveils Her 'Hidden' Side

IT'S BEEN 20 YEARS SINCE THE RELEASE OF *Under The Hat*, Ada Rovatti's confidently swinging 2003 debut featuring guest guitarist Mike Stern, percussionist Don Alias and her then-newlywed husband Randy Brecker on trumpet.

She later showcased her technical command of tenor and soprano saxophones on 2009's *Green Factor*, the first recording for her independent Piloo Records, and on subsequent recordings for the label like 2014's *Disguise* and 2019's *Brecker Plays Rovatti: Sacred Bond*.

For Rovatti's seventh as a leader, *The Hidden World Of Piloo*, she delivers a heartfelt dedication to her late father, Mario Rovatti.

"I lost my dad during COVID," she explained. "That was a blow for me because I was really, really close to him. So everything took its toll, and it was a moment to put some thoughts together. The title of the album, *The Hidden World Of Piloo*, and also the name of the record label, was a nickname given to me by my dad. He always called me Piloo because when I was a kid there was a story of this little cat named Piloo who was mischievous and always doing crazy stuff. And because I was a kind of mischievous like that, it became my nickname."

For one-and-a-half years during the pandemic, Rovatti wasn't able to fly home to Italy to visit her family. Finally, in July 2021, as soon as the all-clear sign was given, she flew to her hometown of Mortara to see her ailing father for one last time. "I went to see him with my brother," she recalled. "And I remember telling him on the flight over, 'I don't think he is going to hang for much longer.' I was able to see him a few hours before he passed away. And when he saw me there at the hospital, he said, 'Ciao, Piloo!' So even to the end he still called me Piloo."

Rovatti speaks in reverent tones about her larger-than-life father, Mario Rovatti, who died just one month short of his 90th birthday. "He was the ultimate Indiana Jones. He lived in Africa, he was a hunter, he traveled all over the world. He was the most knowledgeable person I ever met. He could talk with a brain surgeon, a philosopher or a monk. He could have an amazing conversation with anyone he would talk to. And he was always the life of the party. He was a really funny guy who would throw these wild parties all the time. I grew up in that kind of environment where two or three times a week he would throw a party and we would have the most bizarre array of people in our home, from the count of some country in the middle of Europe to the the plumber who just fixed the toilet to the ex-nun, the ex-convict, the guy from the circus and the attorney general. And as a kid, you can imagine how bizarre that all was. It was exciting and crazy. And people from all over the world would show up at our door, and the door was always open. We had people at 2 a.m. knocking at the door for help or just wanting to talk to somebody. And my dad was the kind of guy who would always sit and talk to them."

Her love can be felt on the gospel-flavored "Take It Home," sung by Niki Harris. "I finished that tune the day before I flew to see him in Italy," she said. "So it was really my way of saying, 'Just let it be. Trust life.'"

On *Piloo*, her most ambitious project to date, Rovatti contemplates everything from the meaning of life on "Life Must Go On," sung by Alma Naidu, to empathy for others with "Hey You (Scintilla Of Wonder)," sung by Fay Claassen. She performs "Make Up Girl," an ode to her 15-year-old daughter, Stella, with some lively instrumental call-and-response between mom and pop. And she even considers the concept of God being a Black woman with the amusing "Done Deal," sung as a clever dialogue between Kurt Elling and Harris.

"This album kind of represents another side of me, a much more intimate side, the side that people don't see about me," said Rovatti. "Because I'm always very cheery and goofy and outgoing, but there is another side that is hidden. I'm a pretty empathetic person, and I feel a lot of the things around me, including somebody's anxiety or sadness. There was a time early on when I was in New York that I had a hard time of it because if I would go into the subway or was in a cab, I was always looking around the subway car or out the window of a cab, and I would feel the power of people. And I felt like I was drawn by their thoughts. Or I could feel somebody's anxiety or sadness. I'm a deep observer, so I look at eyes, movements of the hand, and I can kind of draw my own conclusions from what I see. But then, there have been times where I say, 'What if instead? …' So I'm always very curious about people and their behavior and what makes people do certain things."

Those deeper thoughts, along with some brilliant playing by Rovatti, Brecker, guest guitarists Dean Brown, Tom Guarna and former Brecker Brother Barry Finnerty (who appeared on 1978's *Heavy Metal Be-Bop*), come to the surface on *The Hidden World Of Piloo*.

"I do everything," she concluded. "There is a little funk on this new album, a little gospel, a little jazz, a little straightahead, a waltz, a samba. I mean, I do it all because that's just how hear music." —*Bill Milkowski*

Atwood-Ferguson's Garden of Riches

HANNAH ARISTA

"I'm not rich financially, but rich in spirit," says Miguel Atwood-Ferguson about the expense of making his new recording, *Les Jardins Mystiques*.

MIGUEL ATWOOD-FERGUSON, THE NOTED string arranger, conductor, composer and multi-instrumentalist, has been featured on more than 600 albums. Most memorable is 2011's *Mochilla Presents Timeless: Suite For Ma Dukes* (Mochilla), on which he arranged sublime interpretations of music by the influential hip-hop producer J Dilla and conducted a 60-piece orchestra. Recorded live in February 2009 at the Los Angeles' Harriet and Charles Luckman Fine Arts Complex, the concert showcased such esteemed artists as drummer Karriem Riggins, bassist Thundercat, keyboardist Amp Fiddler, singer Bilal and rappers Talib Kweli and Kevin "Posdnuos" Mercer.

Since then, 43-year-old, Los Angeles-based Atwood-Ferguson has worked with an array of artists, ranging from avant-electronica producer Flying Lotus, percussionist and producer Carlos Gabriel Niño and jazz pianist Jamael Dean to soul singer Mary J. Blige and Brazilian crooner Seu Jorge. But it wasn't until last year that Atwood-Ferguson issued his proper debut, *Les Jardins Mystiques, Vol. 1* (Brainfeeder).

The debut album is not just overdue, it's colossal in nature. Similar in fashion to *The Epic*, the three-disc Brainfeeder debut from saxophonist and composer Kamasi Washington, *Les Jardins Mystiques* showcases a rotating cast of approximately 60 musicians, playing 52 original compositions across three discs or four LPs.

"It was my chance to let people know really what I do," Atwood-Ferguson explained about the sheer size of his leader debut. "This album is me trying to be authentic. I'm not expecting everybody to understand this album or even listen to 20% of it; it's meant to be enjoyed either by one track at a time or listening to it throughout. But I gave myself the green light to do me."

That assertion, however, should not be misconstrued as arrogance. Atwood-Ferguson wants listeners to enjoy *Les Jardins Mystiques*. He says that the compositions are imbued with "healing vibrations." "I definitely care about people's listening experience," he says. "But this was also a cathartic thing for myself, and I let this album exist for my own sanity. As I was delving into it, the music kept telling me that it needed more room to do its thing."

The album's grandiloquence is matched by its supreme allure. Reconciling orchestral shades of Alice Coltrane, Gil Evans, Claude Debussy and Charles Stepney with the modern spiritual jazz-meets-21st century soul and hip-hop of the West Coast Get Down collective, many of the tunes on blossom like sprawling vines and moss across verdant landscapes. Often, melodies and rhythms intertwine in boundless configurations, even though Atwood-Ferguson plants cogent melodies inside them so that the kaleidoscopic compositions become both entrancing and memorable.

Although the album's title is a French translation of "The Mystic Gardens" — many of the song titles such "Eudaimonia," "Kupaianaha" and "Hypatia" reference Greek, Hawaiian, Egyptian and other cosmopolitan origins. Atwood-Ferguson says that the album title reflects his notion of seeing everyone and everything as a "work-in-progress garden." He also sees this album as an act of global activism in promoting mutual peace and harmony by pouring "energy of empowerment into each song."

"I love studying history. A lot of the song titles stem from me studying different cultures from the past," he explains. "This album is me acknowledging the amazingness of the diversity of life. Once we start opening up this appreciation for things in a type of infrastructural space that allow inclusion of different people, places and things to coexist harmoniously, I think we will see links between all of us."

One of the standout compositions is "Eudaimonia," a gorgeous duet between Atwood-Ferguson on viola and the late pianist Austin Peralta. Sounding very much like a gentle John Coltrane tribute performed by violinist Michael White and John Hicks, the composition was one of the first to be recorded for the album. With its literal translation being "the state of condition of good spirit," the song also comes across as a homage to Atwood-Ferguson's friendship with Peralta, who died at the age of 22 in 2012. "Even though [Peralta] passed away 11 years ago, he's still one of my best friends," Atwood-Ferguson says. "My friendship with him still takes on meaning every day."

Another standout is "Kairos," of which Atwood-Ferguson provides two enchanting yet different treatments. With its wondrous, ever-blossoming melody and DOMi's crisscrossing contrapuntal improvisational lines on piano, "Kairos (Kefi)" spirals against JD Beck's skittering drum pattern, while its counterpart, "Kairos (Amor Fati)" takes on a heavier, orchestral stance with a slower, almost prowling pace, anchored by Thundercat's rolling bass line.

The album also contains some intriguing whimsical pieces such as "Porpita," on which Atwood-Ferguson experiments with orchestral backmasking and reversal violin and viola feeds sounds while simultaneously piano and bass melodic gems glimmer in forward motion. There's also the sparkling "Narva," which illuminates with bubbly synth textures that reminisce a vintage video game soundscape.

When speaking about some of the more playful moments on *Les Jardins Mystiques*, Atwood-Ferguson contends, "If there is a such a thing as genius, I think it's related to a sense of play. I think having fun is very underrated. For sure, there are many things that we should be serious about. But I think if we have more fun, it would facilitate our ability to be more critical thinkers and more responsible people. When you have a sense of play, you have things like open-mindedness, being present, and asking questions."

Les Jardins Mystiques was 14 years in the making. Brainfeeder owner Flying Lotus — who happens to be the grandnephew of Alice Coltrane — encouraged Atwood-Fergurson to record his own album when they collaborated on Flying Lotus' 2010 album *Cosmogramma*. But it wasn't until after the *Suite For Ma Dukes* concert that Atwood-Ferguson slowly began working and financially investing in making the album.

Atwood-Ferguson says that he invested his life savings of $20,000 to finance the making *Les Jardins Mystiques*. "Essentially, I've been living hand-to-mouth all of these years. I'm not rich financially, but rich in spirit." —*John Murph*

Riffs

Up with Butcher Brown: Butcher Brown has given a modern spin to Run-DMC's 1993 hit "Down With The King," to be used in promotional spots throughout the ACC Men's basketball season on ESPN. Back in 2020, the band covered Little Richard's "Rip It Up" for *Monday Night Football*'s 50th Anniversary season, also for the sports network.

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Jay Clayton, 1941–2023: A vocalist

Jay Clayton

comfortable in both avant grade as well as more provincial settings, Jay Clayton passed away on New Year's Eve at her home in New Paltz, New York, from small-cell lung cancer. She was 82. Born Judith Theresa Colatone in Youngstown, Ohio, Clayton moved to New York in 1963, befriending saxophonist Steve Lacy. She went on to perform with the greatest artists of her generation, and was the first artistic director of the Women in Jazz Festival. Clayton left New York in 1982 to start the vocal jazz program at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle. She was on faculty there for the next 20 years.

Jerry Coker, 1932–2024: Saxophonist

Jerry Coker

and jazz education legend Jerry Coker, considered one of the pillars of jazz pedagogy, passed away on Jan. 14 in Knoxville, Tennessee. He was 91. A product of the big band era, Coker played with Woody Herman, Stan Kenton, Frank Sinatra, Mel Lewis and others before getting off the road. Coker created one of the first jazz degree programs at the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, and is often considered, along with pioneers Jamey Aebersold and David Baker, as of "the ABCs of jazz education."

Happy Birthday, Ray: Trumpeter Ray Anthony, the last surviving member of the Glenn Miller civilian band, celebrated his 102nd birthday on Jan. 20.

Chad Schneider

Dazzle, The Next Chapter: DazzleJazz Inc., the Denver-based jazz club celebrating its 27th year, has new leadership with trombonist Chad Schneider joining the company as president.

McDole said the trumpet of Terence Blanchard inspired his musical career.

Tyreek McDole Wins Sarah Vaughan Competition

TYREEK MCDOLE IS THE SECOND MAN TO win the annual Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition. He also may be the first competition winner to have been inspired by an animated trumpet-playing alligator named Louis.

McDole, 23, told DownBeat that hearing trumpeter Terence Blanchard play Louis' trumpet parts in the 2009 animated Disney film *The Princess and the Frog* inspired the very young McDole to pursue music.

A smooth singer with a mellow baritone voice, McDole followed in the footsteps of the first male winner, G. Thomas Allen (2021), with his Nov. 19 victory in the 12th annual competition at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark.

On all three of his songs, McDole, who started jazz singing five years ago after playing trumpet and percussion in his school band, showcased a vocal maturity and muscular sound that recalled the romantic styles of Johnny Hartman and Billy Eckstine.

The event is also known as the "Sassy Awards," a nod to a nickname for singer Sarah Vaughan (1924–'90), a NEA Jazz Master and DownBeat Hall of Fame inductee. Vaughan, who hailed from Newark, is being honored throughout the year by NJPAC to mark the 100th anniversary of her birth, which will occur on March 27.

McDole, a resident of New York who grew up in St. Cloud, Florida, received a $5,000 cash prize and will perform alongside past winners and special guests at the Sarah Vaughan Centennial Concert hosted by Dee Dee Bridgewater April 19–20 at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

He has never looked back since making his vocal debut in 2018 at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Essentially Ellington competition, where he won the Outstanding Vocalist award. He played a three-nighter in Philadelphia over Thanksgiving weekend at Chris' Jazz Café and performed at the Black Cat Jazz Supper Club in San Francisco in December.

With his victory McDole joined the ranks of past winners Samara Joy (2019), who won the 2023 Best New Artist Grammy award earlier this year; Cyrille Aimee (2012); Jazzmeia Horn (2013); and last year's winner, Lucía Gutiérrez Rebolloso.

This year, second place went to Darynn Dean of Los Angeles, who has sung at the Hollywood Bowl and was a participant in Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead Residency at the Kennedy Center. Dean, who flashed both abundant technical skill and an ability to swing hard throughout her set, received a $1,500 cash prize. Ekep Nkwelle, a crowd-pleasing Cameroonian-American resident of New York, finished third and took home $500. The other finalists were Emma Smith of London and Bianca Love of New Orleans.

The competition — the final event of this year's TD James Moody Jazz Festival at NJPAC — was open to singers over the age of 18, of all genders and nationalities and not signed by a major record label. Applicants from 37 countries submitted 281 audio tracks online.

The judges for the finals were vocalists Jane Monheit, Patti Austin and Lizz Wright; Christian McBride, NJPAC's jazz advisor and Grammy-winning bassist; and Al Pryor, a three-time Grammy-winning producer and executive vice president of Mack Avenue Records.

The contest featured a high level of skill and a diversity of vocal styles, prompting NJPAC President and CEO John Schreiber to comment of the five finalists: "I hear so many of the great singers in their voices. Each of these singers has a unique sound that defines them."

McDole opened his set with "September In The Rain," sounding horn-like in sections in which he scat-sang. He then tackled the complex, melodically difficult Billy Strayhorn ballad "Lush Life," pausing at length to give key lyrics their due. He finished with "Every Day I Have The Blues," paying tribute to another vocal influence, Joe Williams. —*Michael Barris*

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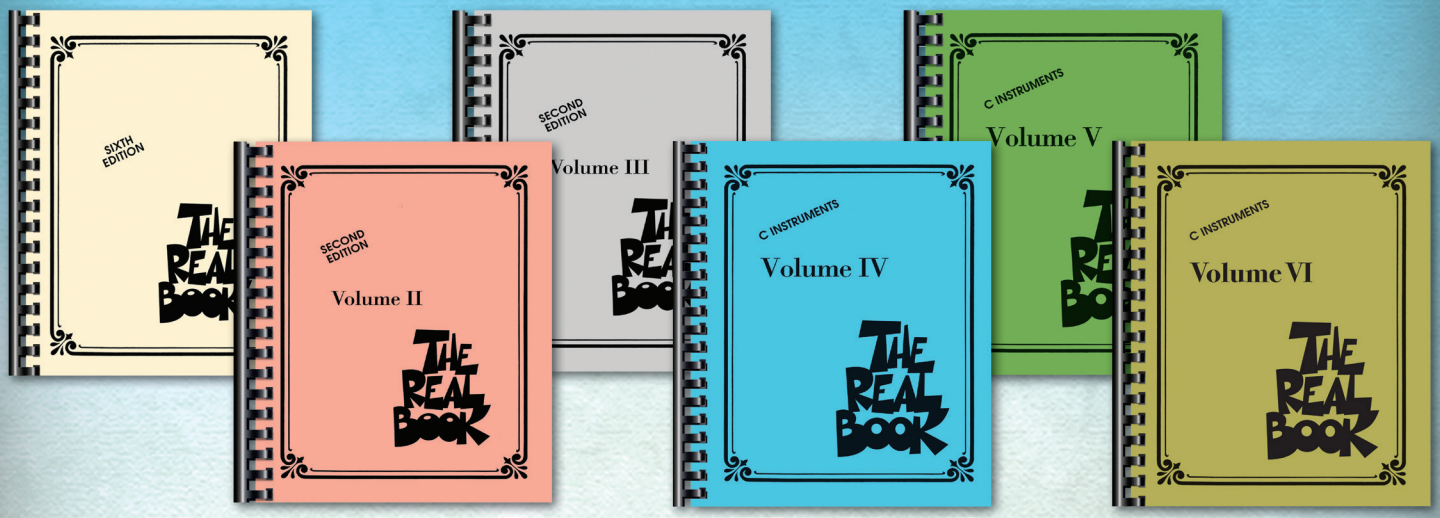

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Ambrose Akinmusire on EXPRESSING BEAUTY

BY JOSEF WOODARD PHOTO BY JAMES ADAMS

At the risk of oversimplifying and romanticizing the story, Ambrose Akinmusire came bursting on the jazz scene at the dawn of the 2010s. The uncommonly gifted, unquestionably unique trumpeter-composer out of Oakland swept his way into an upper echelon of jazz culture, embarking on a decade-long series of albums for Blue Note Records.

MARK SHELDON

"I'm also at a point in my life where I don't feel like I have anything to prove, like at all," says Akinmusire about his art.

Along the way, Akinmusire scooped up numerous DownBeat poll-topping trophies and critical admiration for his conceptually driven album projects — bearing such evocative titles as *When The Heart Emerges Glistening* and *The Imagined Savior Is Far Easier To Paint* — and a growing list of commissioned works.

Without falling into predictable paths, Akinmusire's music loosely aligned with the New Cerebralism in jazz and sometimes entailed chamber-ish stylings, but with a strong melodic directive in tow. He also found fresh ways to deal with social ills and institutional racism, stirring rap into the blend on the potent 2018 album *Origami Harvest* and elsewhere.

But after his 2020 Blue Note finale *On The Tender Spot Of Every Calloused Moment*, this man with the horn somewhat retreated from the public spotlight, partly in sync with the COVID chasm. Suddenly, he re-emerged, glistening, with three notable new projects in 2023.

On the discography front, Akinmusire made his first surprise move last spring by releasing *Beauty Is Enough*, a reflective solo trumpet recording made in the reverberant environs of a Parisian church and the first title on his own new label, Origami Harvest. Then, in October, he released his debut on Nonesuch Records, *Owl Song*, the first of three projects slated for the label. Distinct from his previous recorded work, *Owl Song* is a spare and subtle trio project sans bass, featuring the highly personal guitarist Bill Frisell and sensitive drummer Herlin Riley.

In between those releases came the rhythmically fired Monterey Jazz Festival commission piece *Isakoso Ara* (his second commission from the festival, after 2015's *The Forgotten Places*). Whereas the first piece was more introspective in nature, *Isakoso Ara* ups the dance factor and accentuates the West African root system — Akinmusire's lineage is partly Nigerian. An ecstatically simmering and undulating new twist on the Afro-jazz paradigm, the work also proudly showcases iconic Malian singer Oumou Sangare.

From another new avenue of musical work, Akinmusire has begun dipping his brush into the palette of screen music, scoring the TV series *Blindspotting* and appearing on the score of the film adaptation of the musical *The Color Purple*. Of his gradually growing involvement in film music, Akinmusire says, "I think that's where my passion lies right now. I really love putting sound to narrative. And I love that there's no part of Ambrose in it. I'm really just being a conduit. Maybe my career has always been pointing to this stage in my life, because I've always written to stories and pictures in my head. So when it came time to write for the TV show, it wasn't as foreign as I think it would've been, had that not been a part of my process."

Clearly, transition and artistic realignment are on track in Akinmusire's current agenda.

Transition was also one of many topics on his mind during this interview at the aptly named Ain't Normal coffee in his old hometown of Oakland, near his current Berkeley home. Akinmusire basked in the afterglow of the holidays, preparing for travel to the NYC Winter Jazzfest and then onto a tour with his *Owl Song* allies in Poland and points European.

On a crisp, sun-kissed late morning in January, he sat across the street from the middle school where his musical life began before he headed to the famed jazz incubator that is Berkeley High School — a music program that boasts Joshua Redman, David Murray, Elena Pinderhughes, Benny Green and Akinmusire's drummer-ally Justin Brown as alumni.

After stints and stages in New York and Los Angeles, Akinmusire has found his way home, while branching ever outward and forward, artistically.

Josef Woodard: You have changed up contexts in the past year, at least in terms of releases, with projects unlike what you've done before. Does it feel like you're in a period of transition?
Ambrose Akinmusire: I see why someone would see it as a period of transition. I think I've always wanted to be more versatile. I just love music, and I love playing with creative people. I can remember one of the best months of my life when I played with Joni Mitchell, then I played with Kendrick Lamar and then I played with Roscoe Mitchell. I really love these types of things, these opposites, and really living wholly inside of them.

I think I am in a period of transition in my life. I think everyone is because of the pandemic. During the pandemic, I became a film composer. It's a whole other life, and that has influenced my relationship with the audience. I think I am in a period of transition, but not necessarily just because of music.

Woodard: Something internal?
Akinmusire: Yeah. And I'm a father now. I'm living in the Bay Area. [*acknowledging the fair weather and scenic environment*] I mean, look at this. This is so beautiful. [*pointing across the street*] That's Claremont Middle School, where I started playing jazz. I pass by these things. My mom lives a mile away from here. Fantastic.

I think all those things are influencing me. And I think I'm also at a point in my life where I don't feel like I have anything to prove, at all. I'm really happy, and I'm really just trying to express beauty. And I'm believing in beauty more than ever. I think it's because of this, the life that I'm living.

Woodard: This is as opposed to a period in Los Angeles, where I interviewed you for a DownBeat cover story in 2014, when you actually lived on Ambrose Street.
Akinmusire: Oh, my God. I had just moved there. That was such a different period. I was so confused. I was running away from attention and trying to figure out the path that I was on. I was questioning life. Could my life really be that clear? And, you know, there has to be more to this. That's kind of why I left [New York] and moved to L.A. and started teaching. I wanted to do something completely opposite or away from that road I had been on.

I didn't know if I could make a second album. And, you know, I didn't have a kid yet. I was just wondering. I was barely making it. That was an interesting time of my life. I'm glad that I went through that, and I'm glad that

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JAMES ADAMS

"Owls are stealthy, like little spies, man. You could be walking in nature and never see them, but you know that they're watching you," Akinmusire says about the theme of his new album.

I questioned those things. And I'm glad that I did it away from the [New York] scene. I was in L.A. and this is before the mass exodus to L.A. happened.

Woodard: Tell me about the creative evolution of *Owl Song*. Did this grow out of the connection to Bill Frisell?

Akinmusire: Yes and no. I was just thinking a lot about threes — trinity in all the ways, spiritually, musically and questioning the classic rhythm section. When I was an artist in residence with SFJAZZ, I had to present projects. I always have these imaginary bands that only make sense to me, and this band was one of those. I was playing around with the idea and thought about asking Meshell Ndegeocello because I feel like she fits in that line of things. But in the end, we decided to just do the trio.

[In the Nonesuch deal] I always knew that I wanted to work on three albums at a time. There is another project with Tyshawn Sorey and Sullivan Fortner that's been recorded. And then there's the project that I'm really into right now called *Honey From A Winter Stone*, a sort of sequel to *Origami Harvest*.

Woodard: *Owl Song* has an almost ECM-ish quality. Have you been influenced by a kind of ECM aesthetic?

Akinmusire: I haven't. I knew Tomas Stańko as just a cool cat. He used to come to my gigs, and he would stick around and talk. But I wouldn't say I'm influenced by ECM more than any other label or community of musicians.

A lot of people are saying that, but no. It's funny —one of the main reasons I put "Henya" [an older, signature tune of his] at the end of the album was to sort of say, "I've had this part of me from the beginning." It's new because I'm older and the world is always changing, and each day it's new, but this type of expression has been inside of me. Maybe I'm just living in that part of myself more these days.

Woodard: This is your first blast of work with Nonesuch, after five albums with Blue Note. Can you now look back on your Blue Note period and see it as a large chapter in your musical journey, a definable body of work?

Akinmusire: I can see how there is clearly a line. I took three years in between Blue Note and Nonesuch. … I've been thinking and pointing this direction for a long time. I had a great time at Blue Note. I think I was the last person that [the late, former Blue Note head] Bruce Lundvall signed, and I loved Bruce. We were so close. We would talk on the phone, and we would hang out and just shoot the shit about nothing. And I also love Don [Was, current label president]. But it changed, not for better or worse, just different.

I felt like I've always needed that type of support and openness to be able to create the music that I would like to create. At Nonesuch, it feels like I could, if I wanted to, come out with a polka album. [*laughs*] There would be conversations about it. I'm not saying that at Blue Note there wouldn't, because Don gave me a lot of freedom. He didn't come into the studios. He didn't hear the music until it was mixed and mastered.

Woodard: When we spoke in 2014, you had reservations about focusing on the trumpet, on any emphasis on "blowing."

Akinmusire: I remember that phase. Wow. Back then, I didn't want to solo at all. In hindsight, I'm realizing it was because I was teaching so much at USC, and I was dealing in such a stressful environment around music, that it affected my relationship with improv and improv music. I just thought I had lost it, and I thought I couldn't play anymore. I became really self-conscious about improvising. And when I quit [the USC job], a month or two later it started to come back.

Woodard: Do you think that break recharged you?

Akinmusire: Yeah, it did — to wake up and only have to deal with music. When I came back to teaching [Akinmusire is now artistic director of the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance at UCLA], I realized I needed to have a sort of buffer. I don't know if I developed a certain muscle, but I had a different relationship with teaching, and I feel like it feeds me in a different way than in that period at USC.

Woodard: *Owl Song* is surprisingly lean in terms of soloing. It's not a "blowing" record. Was that design feature of this particular project?

Akinmusire: Yeah. I've always been thinking of [a grander plan] in terms of three projects. So while this project is like that, the *Honey from a Winter Stone* project is more about composition in long form. It has a lot of writing and a lot of collective playing, very involved. And then the Tyshawn-and-Sullivan one has me playing a lot.

I saw the solo record [*Beauty Is Enough*] as a sort of appetizer. "OK, here's nothing but trumpet, 'cause the next album is going to be fuller." It's like, "I'll give you the meat on a different plate." I was thinking a lot about negative space in art, about how much can I carve the silence.

There's something about playing with Bill Frisell and Roscoe [Mitchell]. I haven't played with Roscoe in a while, but I was playing with them at the same time. For me, they're like opposites. But there's something similar about them: intent and mental endurance.

I played with Roscoe, and it was like my brain was exhausted. It's the same feeling I get playing with Bill when it seems like he's barely playing anything. But his attention is to sound, and clarity, and bypassing the first three things you thought about for that one thing that is perfect. He is really striving for that. Whereas Roscoe can be up against the wall for an hour-and-a-half, or he can be super aleatoric. It's just high mental endurance.

I think *Owl Song* came from that. Also, I have always had an obsession with owls. The owl is my spirit animal. Somehow, there is a link between playing with elders, wisdom, owls, it all made sense. So, yeah, it was part of the design — silence. You know, when owls fly, you don't hear them. It's that way even when they're killing their prey. It's something graceful. They

don't make a mess.

Owls are stealthy, like little spies, man. You could be walking in nature and never see them, but you know that they're watching you. And there's something super spiritual about them.

Woodard: Among the song titles, you have "Mr. Frisell" — a hypnotically simple melody with roving bass notes — and the New Orleans-ish "Mr. Riley." You've also written tribute tunes for Roy Hargrove and Roscoe Mitchell. Is the act of paying tribute important to you?

Akinmusire: I think that's really important, making sure that people understand that it's a continuum. If the younger generation and generations to come are watching me, hopefully they'll see me do that and understand that they should attach themselves to that, too. It's really important to be connected, because then you don't have these conversations about what is jazz and where does it come from. It's also really important to get people their flowers while they're here, and I find that I get strength from saying "thank you" and feeling like this is bigger than me.

On the solo record, there's a piece called "Carvin," for Michael Carvin, who I studied with during the pandemic. He really helped me.

I wonder if people who are considered to have singular voices are supposed to give back or to say "thank you" even more. Because I think having a singular voice often means you've stolen from more people than the average person. I'm hugely influenced by Marcus Belgrave and Charles Tolliver, who most people would never even hear. I've stolen from so many people.

Woodard: But if you steal from enough sources and synthesize them into your own voice, people might lose the trail of influences.

Akinmusire: I tell people that all the time. People ask, "How do you come up with your own voice?" I don't. It's really just that I stole from people you don't know. I had this conversation with Bill [Frisell]. He was saying the same thing. He was saying he believes that his style comes from him just doing a poor job at imitating these people that nobody knows. I can totally relate to that.

I also have to say "thank you" because a lot of these cats kicked my ass, like Roy Hargrove, Jeremy Pelt and Wynton [Marsalis]. When I was younger, all these guys would come to my gigs and sit in and beat my ass, and I would go home and just practice. I'm so grateful that they took their time and energy to do that. Dave Douglas … Terence [Blanchard] was another one. And I can remember Nicholas Payton giving me a lesson at 8 o'clock in the morning when I was like 16 years old. I'm so grateful, man.

Woodard: Your solo album was something very special, and unexpected. There aren't many other examples of that format, apart from Wadada Leo Smith, including his tribute to Thelonious Monk.

Akinmusire: There's not much. There are select tracks, like a Tom Harrell solo version of "Joy Spring" on a Helen Merrill tribute record. Roy Hargrove does a solo "Dewey Square" on *Parker's Mood*. But there's not much with trumpet players just playing solo. That was another reason I wanted to do it. I gave myself just three hours. Nothing prepared. It was in a church in Paris, and I hired an engineer. It was high stakes — put up the mics, and we have three hours to see if we can come up with something.

Woodard: I also love the title *Beauty Is Enough*. It is enough.

Akinmusire: I know that now. When I was first starting to record, I knew it, but I didn't act on it. I felt like I had to do all the other stuff to get to the beauty. "Look, I can play all that. I can do all that." But now, I would love to just play a ballad, the whole set.

Woodard: *Origami Harvest* was a special project, blending many musical ideas but also dealing directly with some social issues and the pervasive face of racism — and this was pre-Black Lives Matter. Are you continuing that strain of your work and activist spirit on your upcoming record?

Akinmusire: Yeah, I am. It's not as explicit as it was on the first one. Those issues will always be a part of my music. If I wasn't seeing this as a triptych [of projects], it would've been more pronounced, but it'll be in *Honey*.

The idea of having the trio with Tyshawn and Sullivan is related to that, too — just having three creative Black men from the same generation recording an album. You don't see that. Tyshawn and Sullivan are geniuses of my generation. I like to look back on history and figure out these people that you think would make great music together, but never played together. There aren't too many records with Tyshawn and Sullivan on them. There's a Lage [Lund] record, but that's it. I wanted to facilitate that and also give thanks to some Black creativity.

Woodard: Taking an overview of your career thus far, you've managed to dodge archetypes and maybe old-school modes of what jazz is supposed to be and how you're supposed to do it. Was that a goal of yours, or does that just come naturally?

Akinmusire: I think it's both. I am certainly always aware of what the masses are doing. And when I see too many people going one way, I'm going another way — even if I don't know what's over that way. When I was hanging out with Joni [Mitchell], she always used to say, "Don't have that herd mentality." That was her favorite. She's like, "If you see all the cows going that way, go the other way."

I think it comes natural to me. When my mom and my family tell me stories of me as a kid, there are things related to that attitude already. But I do try to stay aware of what's going on, the trends and all that stuff, and I think it does subconsciously influence the decisions that I make. I'm never consciously trying to be opposed to what's going on, but I do consciously try to stay aware of what's going on, in music and in the world.

Woodard: In 2014, I asked if music was a calling more than a career. How would you answer that now?

Akinmusire: It's definitely not a career — it's a 100% calling. I am starting to ask myself, when I say "yes" to a gig, can I help people here? Is this just for the money? Is this just another gig? Or do I feel like I have something to contribute right now?

I think it's more of a calling. I am aware, and I value, that I can make people feel, and I really try to take care of that. It's not something I take lightly. **DB**

> # 'It's really just that I stole from people you don't know.'
> —Akinmusire on finding his own voice

CHES SMITH
'A FEARLESS SEEKER'

BY GARY FUKUSHIMA PHOTO BY EBRU YILDIZ

Cities and towns, large and small, through their geography, culture, cuisine and dialect, possess unique, compelling qualities. In California, a plethora of such places abound: Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Carmel, Ojai, Paso Robles, Sacramento ... wait, Sacramento? Granted, that city's claims to fame are as the state capital and the home of a perpetually middling professional basketball team, but otherwise, it doesn't get much respect.

Ches Smith is from Sacramento. He was recently there again, on vacation with his family, speaking over video from a bedroom in his sister's house. "I found growing up here in Sacramento that there was always a bigger city to model after or something like that," he offered. In a way, Smith embodies his hometown, as an artist who needed time and travel to search for his own identity, from Sacramento to Eugene, Oregon, the Bay Area, Los Angeles and ultimately Brooklyn, New York, where he has established himself as one of the foremost forward-thinking drummers, composers and bandleaders in a thriving creative music scene. "Ches Smith is a miracle. An eternally curious, imaginative, honest musician who always and instinctively puts his virtuosity at the service of the music," said avant-garde visionary John Zorn in an email. "Ches is the real deal, and it is a deep honor to have him [as] a treasured member of my tightest, innermost crew."

BIANCA CLAIRCIDOR

The band from *Laugh Ash*, from left, Shahzad Ismaily, Shara Lunon, Anna Webber, James Brandon Lewis, Kyle Armbrust, Ches Smith, Michael Nicolas, Oscar Noriega, Nate Wooley and Jennifer Choi.

Smith has only solidified his position at the center of the New York creative music scene with the release of his latest album, *Laugh Ash*, on Pyroclastic Records, the label founded in 2016 by pianist Kris Davis. It's his third release on Pyroclastic, following *Path Of Seven Colors* (2021), his critically acclaimed homage to Haitian Voudou music with his ensemble We All Break; and *Interpret It Well* (2022), featuring a more introspective group with violist Mat Maneri, pianist Craig Taborn and special guest Bill Frisell. The contrasting aesthetics of these albums merely scratch the surface of the eclecticism Smith has explored over three decades as a professional musician.

"The mission of the label is to support non-commercial, adventurous artists, artists who are willing to take chances and try new ideas," said Davis, who has known and played with Smith since he first moved to New York. "Ches has all of those qualities. And you can feel the growth and development of his artistry from album to album."

Laugh Ash, in turn, is strikingly different from Smith's last album — really, from anything he has done prior. For this project he assembled a 10-piece group of woodwinds and strings, bassist/keyboardist Shahzad Ismaily and vocalist Shara Lunon, supplemented by electronic drum loops and effects.

The initial conception for the music started with those loops, something Smith had started to explore with his longstanding solo drums and vibraphone project, Congs for Brums. "I had made a bunch of tracks, almost like hip-hop style, over the last few years," he explained. "I was like, how do these producers make stuff that grooves like a drum set player? I was working on different combinations of sounds and where to put things in the beat … like snare drums before or after the beat, things that I think about all the time playing." During the pandemic, he leaned in further to understand how to incorporate those beats into live performance.

Another striking feature is the incorporation of the human voice, something Smith first implemented in We All Break, where original songs by tanbou/vocalist Daniel Brevil were included with more traditional Voudou songs. That experience led Smith to ask Lunon to write her own lyrics and melodies to tracks of the music he sent her for *Laugh Ash*. Lunon responded with a potpourri of adventurous melodies, spoken-word poetry and, as in the case of the first track, "Minimalism," a Krautrock-style rap over Smith's hybrid electro-acoustic beats, like an artful version of Madonna's "Vogue."

"[Shara] has a classical background, in addition to experience in hip-hop and punk rock and all kinds of different scenes," said Smith. "She can just nail all these atonal melodies, so I'd have her blend into those as well." He blended her voice into essentially a modern-classical chamber ensemble formed from some of the most adventurous free improvisers in New York, showcasing another dimension of Smith's compositional acumen. Consider "Exit Shivers," a bone-chilling, through-composed piece that amalgamates the timbral, improvisational and rhythmic into an unsettling panoply of sound that would function well with a modern Alfred Hitchcock movie, if such a thing existed.

Smith utilized the repetitive, polyrhythmic concepts from his studies in Haitian Voudou throughout the ensemble, sounding at times like a digital arpeggiator, or even a complex, EDM-type groove palette with layers of sound samples.

"One thing I noticed about the music Ches composed," said James Brandon Lewis, who plays tenor saxophone on *Laugh Ash*, "some of this does sound sampled, but it's actually written-out composition." In fact, all of the music was recorded in real-time, no after-the-fact overdubbing or layering.

"He's creating these repetitive structures with the strings, just gorgeous orchestrations, really hitting the sweet spots on those instruments," Lewis continued, "and then of course [there's] the punk stuff, mixing all the influences together … that's where we get the really unique sound of music, when we're at a point where it should be almost genre-less."

Gordon McChesney Smith's journey to a genre-less destination began as a teenager in Sacramento. He went to Rio Americano High School, long known for the strength of its jazz program, but Smith was never a part of it. "It was such a waste," he joked. "I was playing

drum set at the time, but playing in metal bands and my own bands and trying to write music. There was a teacher there who told me Steely Dan was jazz, so I thought that's what jazz was. Then there was all this smooth jazz happening in Sacramento at the time — that basketball player Wayman Tisdale had a smooth jazz band — and I was like, oh, jazz, I don't think that's for me at all."

Thankfully, Smith found a drum teacher who turned him on to Tony Williams and other jazz drummers, and he also found that a lot of the punk and rock musicians he knew outside of school were into late John Coltrane and other types of free jazz. As his curiosity in jazz piqued, he began to hang out with jazz students while studying philosophy at the University of Oregon in Eugene. One of his friends got him into a jazz combo mentored by pianist/organist Gary Versace, who was on faculty at the time. One of the requirements for participation was to learn and perform drum transcriptions from drummers ranging from Sonny Greer to Philly Joe Jones.

Smith's next sojourn was back down to the Bay Area, where he began working local gigs. "I was jumping around to different scenes," he recalled. "There was a totally free improv scene. I had my own heavy music band that I basically just dumped money into, and then tried to fund it with my jazz gigs, which is not a financially viable proposition."

Smith recalled the challenges of crossing genres. "I remember I was on some straightahead gig, talking to a trumpet player, and he was like, you're into punk rock — I don't see how you could ever do that and jazz at the same time, in the same year, even. And I was like, 'Yeah, you're probably right, but I don't know … .'"

Things started to change when he met and befriended bassist Devin Hoff on another jazz gig. "He was into like Ornette [Coleman] and Black Flag and all this stuff," Smith said of Hoff. "He was the first person that admitted to liking all this other stuff — I kind of was hiding all the other stuff I was into from that [jazz] scene. I just didn't think there was any mutual respect or communication between the different scenes there … whether that's correct or not, I don't know."

The two of them formed their own duo called Good for Cows, giving Smith plenty of opportunities to compose. "It was just upright bass and drums, and he'd just be like, "Yeah, let's write," so I brought in stuff that I wrote on the piano and tried to make it work for just us."

It was at this time that Smith also met percussionist William Winant while sitting in with a contemporary music ensemble at Mills College. Smith made such an impression at the school that faculty looked for ways to bring him into their master's program on scholarship.

"I was a philosophy major in my undergrad," Smith remembered. "One of the faculty members actually said, 'Just meet with me once a week and we'll start getting your harmony ready, so you can apply and be caught up with the grad students that are coming from conservatories.'"

It was at Mills where Smith began to write and perform music in a classical context. While he was there, he played drums for an Afro Haitian dance class, kindling a lifelong fascination of Haitian Voudou music.

Hoff and Winant were key figures in Smith's foray deeper into the dual worlds of avant-garde music and experimental rock, working with Xiu Xiu and Secret Chiefs 3 — the latter formed from the core of another group, Mr. Bungle, for whom Winant had Smith sub for him on percussion. The bassist in that band was Trevor Dunn, whom Smith had been playing with in jazz settings.

"We went on the road, and we totally became friends. We kind of clicked," Smith said of Dunn. "And [afterward] we did a trio free-improv gig, and that's sort of where he got the idea to use me in one of his bands even

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"He is always growing, always learning, always moving forward," said John Zorn of Smith.

> ***'I started getting calls for some pop touring, but I instinctively avoided it.'***

though I was in the Bay at the time."

Dunn had relocated to New York, and he brought Smith out frequently to play in Trio Convulsant, a band Dunn formed in 1998 featuring a promising young guitarist named Mary Halvorson.

"We became good friends pretty fast, and we remained good friends the whole time," Halvorson said of Smith. "We still work together a lot today. In addition to being just an outstanding human being, he's an incredible drummer, percussionist, vibraphonist. There's also a real element of unpredictability to his playing … . He manages to simultaneously be really inside the music and really sensitive, but also could totally go off the rails at any moment."

Halvorson and Smith bonded over a shared penchant for the extreme in their music. "Trevor's concept behind that band was integrating jazz and experimentalism into one thing," explained Halvorson. "You know, not everything being polite all the time, like an element of just punching you in the face sometimes."

It was another decade before Smith would end up in New York. He decided first to try Los Angeles, with its untold opportunities to play many different kinds of music.

"I started getting calls for some pop touring," he remembered, "but I instinctively avoided it. I'd be like, 'Well, I have this door gig to play in New York, I don't think I can do that six-week tour, you know?' I was like, 'God, am I stupid for turning this down?' Because it's always such a struggle, month to month, paying rent, but I just sort of knew that I didn't want to go down that road, even though a lot of my friends that were good jazz musicians were doing that on the side."

The fear of not having success in one's ideal field of artistry leads many to compromise those very ideals. One artist who has built his reputation on defiantly not doing that is Zorn, who first met Smith in 2003 in San Francisco when Smith recorded one of Zorn's klezmer pieces with Hoff and clarinetist Ben Goldberg. They continued to remain in contact through their shared circle of musical compatriots over the next decade, with Zorn eventually asking Smith to perform in a trio at the 2012 Marciac Jazz Festival. Afterward, Smith began to play with Zorn more and more regularly.

The experience proved to be a challenge for Smith. "We're improvising the whole time but catching all this stuff in the score as well. I was like, oh, man, I gotta figure this out, because I don't think it's going great. [Zorn] just kept asking me to do it … and then it started clicking: I can try to do a ton of different stuff against the music and frame it in different ways."

Said Zorn of Smith, "He is always growing, always learning, always moving forward. Every time we work together he's better than the last. And in that sense, among many others, he is a true artist — a fearless seeker who epitomizes the breakthrough mentality, who will go anywhere, do anything, risk everything to take the music to the next level."

"I talk to Zorn regularly about that stuff," Smith said about his mentor's no-holds-barred approach to art. "I agree with being uncompromising, but my personality type is much different, I know that much. I sort of have, I wouldn't call it compromise, but cooperation built into me, so my music comes out way different because of that. I'm like a Libra middle child: I like to take situations and go, 'How do I work with this or fit in with this?' I'm not exactly the one dictating the whole situation."

A curious, cooperative, collaborative mentality has worked for Smith, who has recorded more than 60 albums under his own name and with other artists.

"What I'm happy about is that it's not like total freelance [work]," he said. "I wouldn't even call the majority of that session work. I'm usually involved with those people, and their music, in pretty significant ways. I love to write music, but I don't necessarily like leading. I don't even really care if it's my name on it."

"Ches definitely is a very searching musician, and maybe that's a quality people [in our community] share: having interest in all types of music and wanting to try to create something original, and also being really open," said Halvorson.

"I feel like the whole community is this great big group, and we do subsections of that, and I'm into exploring other people's music as well," said Smith. "That part feels good about having a big output — it's about relationships."

The erstwhile rock drummer from Sacramento, in his curious pursuit of knowledge, has found himself in the greater universe of the music and musicians he has sought. **DB**

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A ‘LOVESOME’

STORY IN PARIS

BY ALLEN MORRISON PHOTOS BY MICHAEL JACKSON

"Pianistic harmony is always something I've gravitated to in my guitar playing," said Rosenwinkel.

"It's like if you love food and can go to a Michelin star restaurant," Kurt Rosenwinkel said of playing with Geri Allen.

"There are a few musicians you hear where, as somebody once said, the molecules in the room change. Geri was one of them." Kurt Rosenwinkel, the revered American guitarist now making his home in Berlin, was talking about his impressions upon first hearing the late pianist/composer Geri Allen.

"It was like somebody had unlocked a door to the universe. It was just such a beautiful and metaphysical experience to listen to her play, not just the notes but also the spirit. It made a huge impression on me and drew me to her. I had an amazing experience just being in her presence. I felt a lot of gratitude to know somebody like that."

Rosenwinkel and Allen played together just three times before her untimely death from cancer in 2017. The first two were at a musicians' seminar/retreat in Denmark in 2009 and at the Jazz Standard in New York in 2012, where she was a guest artist with Rosenwinkel's quartet.

As a duo, however, they played together only once, and it was magical. The concert, recorded in Paris in 2012 and finally released late last year, after delays spanning more than a decade, became, remarkably, one of the most critically acclaimed jazz albums of 2023, showing up on many jazz "10 best" lists. It is *A Lovesome Thing* (Motéma/Heartcore), recorded at the Philharmonie de Paris as part of the city's Jazz à la Villette Festival.

The duo of piano and electric guitar is one of the trickier combinations in jazz: two musicians playing complex chordal instruments while trying not to step on each other's musical toes or overlap on the sonic spectrum. As in any duo, both musicians are completely exposed; there is no place to hide. There are a thousand ways to fail at any given moment.

The built-in complications may be the reason for the relative scarcity of such duos in jazz history. The Allen/Rosenwinkel meeting adds to the small pantheon of ingenious piano/guitar duo recordings from the likes of Bill Evans & Jim Hall, Brad Mehldau & Pat Metheny, Fred Hersch & Bill Frisell.

A Lovesome Thing contains only five songs, each averaging about 10 minutes: Billy Strayhorn's haunting, emotional "A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing," George Gershwin's "Embraceable You," Thelonious Monk's "Ruby My Dear" and two originals: Rosenwinkel's charming waltz "Simple #2" and Allen's previously unrecorded "Open-Handed Reach," which she had written for a tribute to pianist Billy Taylor.

Each track has a palpable sense of yearning and mystery. One hears the artists trying to conjure something sacred as they delicately converse, feel, support and finish each other's sentences.

"They had a wonderful ability to dance and not get in each other's way," Motéma founder Jana Herzen said in an interview from her San Francisco headquarters. "It can often get muddy when you combine those two instruments, but not here. They were worthy partners; there was a constant waterfall of ideas … a special camaraderie that you can hear. It's a huge honor for us to be able to release this in combination with Heartcore [Rosenwinkel's record label]."

In her liner notes for the album, Ora Harris, Allen's long-time manager and an associate producer, wrote that "Geri considered the musical interaction that night to be a huge success. She also felt that the freedom of the duo was musically joyful, as it had so much beauty, space and warmth. … In subsequent years she often spoke of the concert in Paris as having been very open, flowing and natural. Geri would be very proud to have this beautiful music available to the listening public."

Their ability to accompany each other so well seems to have been related to each artist's fondness for the other's instrument. Allen's swirling, rippling piano chords are often guitar-like, providing a warm embrace for Rosenwinkel's improvisational flights. And when she solos on piano, Rosenwinkel returns the favor. "Geri's chordal motion was very guitar-oriented," said longtime friend and collaborator Terri Lyne Carrington. For his part, Rosenwinkel's experience as a pianist — as heard on his 2022 album *Kurt Rosenwinkel Plays Piano* (Heartcore) — contributes to the duo's telepathy.

"I love the piano," Rosenwinkel said via Zoom from Berlin. "My mom and dad were pianists. I'm drawn to playing with pianists and always have been. But when you're playing with Geri Allen, that's just incredible. It's like if you love food and can go to a Michelin star restaurant — that's what playing with her was like."

The duo probes and reconsiders three familiar tunes, turning them into modernist dreamscapes. Their "Embraceable You," for instance, based on Herbie Hancock's bold arrangement on his 1998 album *Gershwin's World*, transforms the classic ballad with unexpected harmonies and lucid improvisations; often they linger on an emotionally redolent substitution to fully explore its

nuances. A kind of mind-melding occurs. At times, Rosenwinkel plays pianistic phrases on guitar as Allen strums the piano. Elsewhere, Rosenwinkel provides a gently percussive stream bed for Allen's descending ripples of sound.

After the ovation dies down, Allen is heard checking in with her audience, as if making sure they were still with her and Rosenwinkel. Giving Hancock credit for the arrangement, she says, "I don't know if you recognized the melody, but it was in there, amidst all that beautiful dense harmony."

In conversation, Rosenwinkel tried to explain their musical bond. "I think both of us are quite grounded in the craft, the tradition and the harmonic sense. Yet I felt we shared something mystical as well. … I felt a lot of trust in both ways. Pianistic harmony is always something I've gravitated to in my guitar playing. And she is such a master of every kind of contour and orchestration on the piano and such a giving musician that she's able to create space for the other musicians around her. Everybody loved to play with her. She was always very generous as an accompanist. We both felt the same way about that. I love to accompany people. Even when I'm playing a solo with somebody, it's like I'm accompanying the accompanist."

He mused on Allen's contradictions. "She was so giving to the other musicians, and yet Geri was so fierce. She could be intimidating: an incredible, almost terrifying force on the piano. That was so exciting to me. But also so gentle and kind, accommodating and sweet — and as a person, very humble and down to earth."

Allen and Rosenwinkel had little time to prepare for this one-off concert. "I flew in on the day of the show, just with my Moffa Maryan archtop, hand-built in Italy," Rosenwinkel recalled. "And I just plugged into the amp, except for an octave pedal to give me some lower bass notes. I wanted to have a rehearsal, but Geri had a medical issue with her daughter, so we couldn't fly in a day early to rehearse.

"Instead, we met the day of the show at the venue, did a sound check and went over a couple of things very quickly: my original, her original, and we decided on the other tunes. I remember we went over the Herbie changes to 'Embraceable,' the chart for which Allen had sent in advance. And we touched on the very specific ending to 'Ruby My Dear.'

"After the concert, the engineer gave me a CD with MP3s," Rosenwinkel continued. "I had the recording and sent it to Geri. And I listened to it, and thought it was wonderful, a beautiful piece of music. I had it in the back of my mind for years that I possessed this recording and would someday release it.

"In 2017, about the time when I started Heartcore, I decided I wanted to release it. It was about that time that Geri passed. So I approached Geri's manager, Ora, with the idea to put it out. She suggested that Jana be involved, too. So the three of us started to do it together. We approached Cité de la Musique [the Parisian complex that includes the Philharmonie] and asked them for the rights. They said they belonged to SPEDIDAM [a French property rights organization for performers]. Then ensued five years to get it out from under their jurisdiction. It was like pulling teeth. They made tough financial demands."

SPEDIDAM's purpose is to preserve the rights of performers at live concerts — "a noble mission," Rosenwinkel said. "But it became clear that 90 percent of the financial figures they were demanding would go back to us."

Negotiations started and stopped. They were interrupted by the untimely death of Herzen's partner, bassist Charnett Moffett, in 2022. "Finally, Jana reinitiated discussions, and the figure magically changed to something we could afford. It was a beautiful team, the three of us, because we all felt strongly about the music and were doing it as a testament to Geri. It was a labor of love."

In celebration of the release of *A Lovesome Thing*, Rosenwinkel traveled to Paris in November to play songs from the album in a duo with pianist Gerald Clayton. The concert was the culmination of a weekend of events celebrating the 20th anniversary of Motéma at Paris' Sunset-Sunside jazz club and featuring the label's latest artists, Flamenkora and Shuteen Erdenebaatar.

Clayton was part of a generation of young jazz pianists indelibly influenced by Allen. He got to know her a bit when he was living in New York, during the last decade of her life. "She put together special opportunities for young pianists to get together and play, solo and duo concerts," Clayton recalled from his home in Southern California. "She was a leader, not just of the jazz community, but also the piano community. Her solo piano record [2010's *Flying Toward The Sound* on Motéma] was a blueprint for so many other amazing artists, like Jason Moran, Vijay Iyer and Craig Taborn.

"I loved her fearlessness. She had the courage to really push beyond the personal boundaries we set for ourselves. We come to know our own playing, ears and sound; there's a tendency to stay a bit safe. Geri didn't do that. She always pushed beyond what she was capable of doing. I find that really inspiring."

Playing duo with Rosenwinkel "was like a bucket-list kind of experience for me; it was a joy," Clayton said. "That was the first time I got to play with Kurt in a duo. We exchanged a list of songs we'd like to play together, and his list was so hip. … We played a fair bit of the album, half or more. Of course, we did the title cut. There was that beautiful arrangement of 'Embraceable You' with Herbie's reharmonization. We also played 'Quasimodo,' which is a contrafact of 'Embraceable You.' But because of Herbie's really wide, explorative reharm, nobody's ears were feeling like there was any redundancy there." The duo also performed "Self-Portrait In Three Colors" by Charles Mingus and "Pensativa" by Clare Fischer. Both artists said they expect to perform together as a duo again soon.

Both were similarly touched by Geri Allen's commitment, humility and aspiration to attain something transcendent. "We shared a harmonic language and a spiritual approach to the music," Rosenwinkel said. "She preferred to keep that stuff unspoken. She was down to earth and quite modest. She didn't take flights of fancy talking about these spaces, which are real but intimate and personal. We shared the reality of that spiritual stuff, but we kept it unspoken. We let the music do the talking. But she did acknowledge that element to me."

Herzen agreed: "Kurt and Geri met on a spiritual plane. That's what we're hearing in the music. For me, it's a miracle. You have to tune in at another level. Like love, we feel it, but it's invisible." **DB**

'Kurt and Geri met on a spiritual plane.'

—Motéma's Jana Herzen

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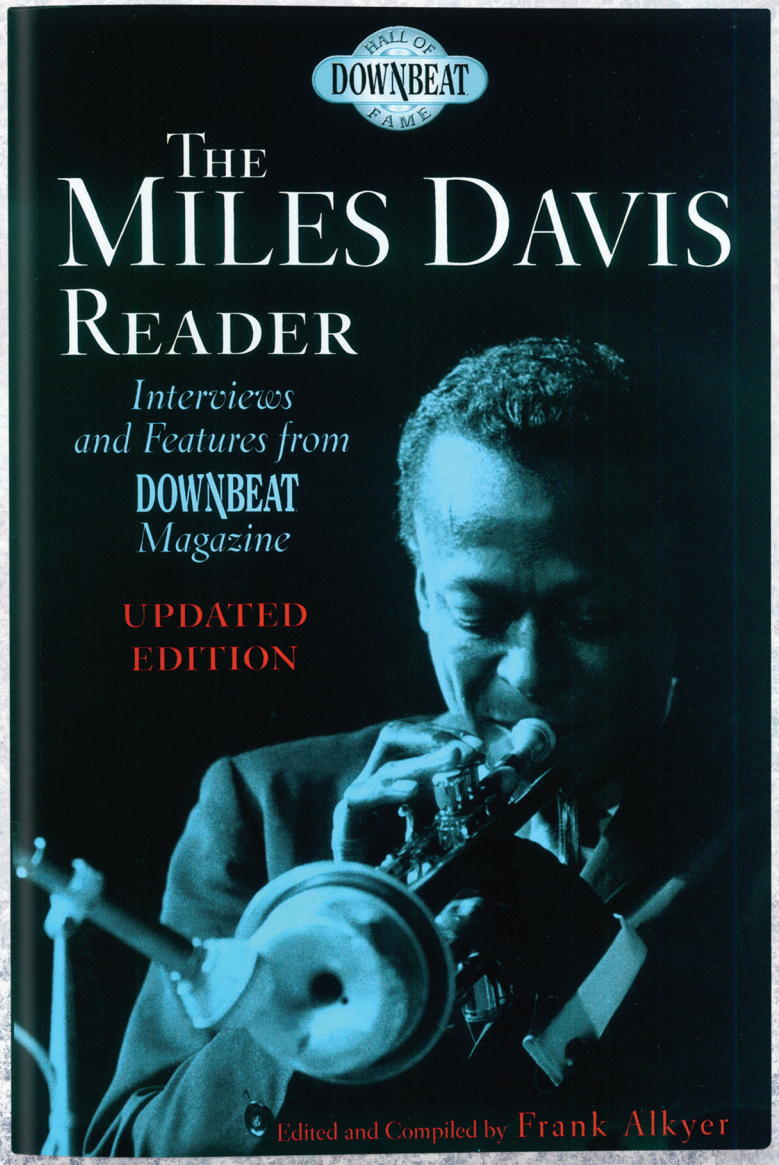

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André 3000's debut solo offering features the flute.

André 3000
New Blue Sun
EPIC

★★

Contrary to what you might have heard, this is not a jazz flute album — at least not the way most people would understand the words "jazz" or "flute." André 3000, half of the rap duo OutKast, claims to own somewhere between 30 and 40 flutes, but features "flute" on only three tracks here (and never a standard C flute). For the bulk of the album, he plays a digital wind instrument, which he reportedly had never touched before the recording sessions. (It shows.)

The music is lean and coloristic, with a fondness for vaporous synths and splashing, burbling percussion that helps the sound fade pleasantly into the background. Compositionally, there's a lot of repetition. "I Swear, I Really Wanted to Make A 'Rap' Album But This Is Literally The Way The Wind Blew Me This Time" spends nine of its 12 minutes offering minor variations on a simple eight-bar theme.

"That Night In Hawaii When I Turned Into A Panther …" uses a "contrabass flute" — actually a custom-built indigenous flute, pitched closer to a standard alto flute — through a harmonizer, getting a groove similar to trumpeter Jon Hassell's. But because André's playing lacks the Carnatic discipline of Hassell's improvisations, the music rarely rises above atmospheric noodling.

If the buzz around *New Blue Sun* had you hoping for a contemporary equivalent to Paul Horn's Taj Mahal album, *Inside*, you will likely be disappointed. But if you were looking for something quiet and pretty that doesn't ask you to actually listen, this is your jam.

—J.D. Considine

New Blue Sun: I Swear, I Really Wanted To Make A "Rap" Album But This Is Literally The Way; The Wind Blew Me This Time; The Slang Word P(*)ssy Rolls Off The Tongue With Far Better Ease Than The Proper Word Vagina. Do You Agree?; That Night In Hawaii When I Turned Into A Panther And Started Making These Low Register Purring Tones That I Couldn't Control .. Sh¥t Was Wild; BuyPoloDisorder's Daughter Wears A 3000™ Button Down Embroidered; Ninety Three 'Til Infinity And Beyoncé; Ghandi, Dalai Lama, Your Lord & Savior J.C./Bundy, Jeffrey Dahmer, And John Wayne Gacy; Ants To You, Gods To Who?; Dreams Once Buried Beneath The Dungeon Floor Slowly Sprout Into Undying Gardens. (87:46)

Personnel: André 3000, digital wind instrument (1, 2, 5–8), contrabass flute (3), Maya flute (4), various wood and bamboo flutes (5), pedals (3–5), panther toning (3); Mia Doi Todd, vocals (6, 7); V.C.R., violin, effects (5); Nate Mercereau, guitar, guitar synth, live sampling (1–4, 8); Surya Botofasina, keyboards, synthesizer (1, 2, 4, 8); Diego Gaeta, keyboards, Moog synthesizer (5), piano (6, 7); Matthewdavid, mycelial electronics (5); Jesse Peterson, bass, guembri, pedals (6, 7); Deantoni Parks, lead drums (3); Carlos Niño, bells, chimes, cymbals, drums, gongs, plants, percussion.

Ordering info: epicrecords.com

Sullivan Fortner
Solo Game
ARTWORK
★★★★

Each of the 18 instrumental tracks on pianist Sullivan Fortner's *Solo Game* was a first take. Such finesse requires extreme technical prowess, but it also demands a limitless wealth of improvisational ideas. In this, Fortner has few peers.

As the title suggests, Fortner is the lone player on this two-disc opus (with hand claps by drummer Kyle Poole and vocalese by co-producer/singer Cécile McLorin Salvant on two different tracks), and though acoustic piano is his bailiwick, Fortner uses other instruments in these nimbly improvised performances: electronic keyboards, hand percussion, wordless vocals. Regardless of the medium, the acuity of his compositional vision almost contradicts the spontaneity of the execution. Just how do these improvisations spring so fully formed from those deft hands?

Fortner's brilliance lies in the unexpected journey through each piece. Under his purview the sweet romance of "I Didn't Know What Time It Was" becomes a dark rumination, the ditty "I'm All Smiles" a near-classical etude and "Don't You Worry 'Bout A Thing" an exposition of refined reharmonization. Later, as Fortner adds experimental instrumentation to his originals: fast-clip electronica to "It's A Game," a retro scratchiness to "Stag" and breathy, processed vocals on "Space Walk."

Notably, the titles mentioned here give only a glimpse into the album's rich inventiveness, which demands a full listen. —*Suzanne Lorge*

Solo Game: Don't You Worry About a Thing; I Didn't Know What Time It Was; Congolese Children; I'm All Smiles; Invitation; Once I Loved; Cute; This Is New; Come Sunday; Power Mode; It's A Game; Snakes and Ladders; Hounds and Jackal; King's Table; Stag; Cross and Circle; Space Walk; Valse Du Petit Chien; Fred Hersch, Notes On Solo; Jason Moran, Notes On Game. (79:00)
Personnel: Sullivan Fortner, piano, Fender Rhodes, Hammond B-3 organ, vibes, celeste, chime tree, Moog, vocoder, hand percussion, egg shaker, triangle, vocals, hand claps, shakers, Canopus bass drum, Mongolian gong; Kyle Poole, hand claps (11); Cécile McLorin Salvant, vocals (12).
Ordering info: sullivanfortnermusic.com

Joel Ross
nublues
BLUE NOTE
★★★★

On his fourth Blue Note outing, spectacular vibraphonist Joel Ross' well-honed quartet looks at blues form and feeling from various perspectives, nodding to John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, Ornette Coleman and Johann Sebastian Bach, as well as drawing in Ross' material. Resonant, soulful and flowing, *nublues*' highlights crisp interchanges between Ross and muscular alto saxophonist Immanuel Wilkins, who seamlessly switch between thunderous swing and misty or repetitively hypnotic moods.

After the peaceful, atmospheric intro, "early," which recalls the shimmering freshness of Coltrane's "After The Rain" (visited by Ross on an earlier album), the quartet launches into Trane's throbbing minor blues, "Equinox," with Ross, Wilkins and pianist Jeremy Corren offering discretely articulated, well-developed solos. Instead of reprising the head, the band whirls and swirls in place, then segues into Ross' lyrical "mellowdee," a sinuous, Coleman-like melody that gives way to a Gabrielle Gora's chorus of fluttering, overdubbed flutes, "Chant." A haunting, hesitant interlude — appropriately named "What Am I Waiting For" — precedes a visit to church, with the moving hymn "Bach (God

The Father In Eternity)." The haunting title track emerges from all this, with Ross' shimmering vibes hammering a slow, three-note arpeggio with a tritone in the middle, punctuated by bursts of bluesy thirds and segueing to the swinging "ya know." Though *nublues* sags a bit in the middle and doesn't highlight Mendenhall and drummer Jeremy Dutton much, the album drinks deeply and thoughtfully from an ancient well. —*Paul de Barros*

nublues: early; equinox; mellowdee; chant; what am I waiting for; bach (God the Father in Eternity); nublues; ya know; evidence; central park west; nublues (fade). (77:00)
Personnel: Joey Ross, vibes; Immanuel Wilkins, alto saxophone; Gabrielle Garo, flute (4); Jeremy Corren, piano; Kanoa Mendenhall, bass; Jeremy Dutton; drums.
Ordering info: bluenote.com

Aaron Parks Little Big
Live In Berlin
INDEPENDENT RELEASE
★★★★

I don't stop by Parksville often enough, and when I do, I mainly land on the pianist's acoustic endeavors. So there was a bit of revelation in play while absorbing the twists and turns of this electric ensemble, a crafty foursome whose goals regarding stylistic breadth and performance dynamics are reflected in its band name.

The 40-year-old leader makes hay with the notion of opposites attracting; the way his squad balances rounded melodies with pointed rhythms in this on-the-fly iPhone capture of a German club gig from last spring is somewhat of a clash, but one whose friction ignites a valuable canvass of activity that's sometimes tender, sometimes boisterous.

Parks has had a singular way of aligning tunes and grooves since 2008's *Invisible Cinema*, an influential date that telescoped the action found on Little Big's self-titled debut a decade after. A composer with a fondness for supple motifs that often crest with heartfelt bravado, he seldom hides his interests in sentimental themes or cinematic fanfares.

Some pieces register as singable shards, earworms molded to fit various applications. Often those applications are piercing solos; the leader and guitarist Greg Tuohey know exactly how to light fires in various sections of their chosen terrain.

The steamy fervor of a cramped-club feel finds this "bootleg" refuting the pristine character of Little Big's studio work, records I found a little too freeze-dried. Immediacy dominates, and while the use of pulse and ostinato as soloist turf can feel a tad tedious, the crackle of interplay makes it all worthwhile.

—*Jim Macnie*

Live In Berlin: Rising Mind; My Mistake; Solace; Right In Front Of Me; Sports; Here; Kid; Siren. (59:02)
Personnel: Aaron Parks, piano, keyboard; Greg Tuohey, guitar; David Ginyard Jr., bass; Jongkuk Kim, drums.
Ordering info: aaronparks.bandcamp.com

The Hot Box

Critics	J.D. Considine	Suzanne Lorge	Paul de Barros	Jim Macnie
André 3000 *New Blue Sun*	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★½
Sullivan Fortner *Solo Game*	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★
Joel Ross *nublues*	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★
Aaron Parks Little Big *Live In Berlin*	★★★½	★★★½	★★★	★★★★

Critics' Comments

André 3000, *New Blue Sun*

In a precipitous 180-degree turn, Andre 3000 leaps into the wilds of spirit-evoking instrumental music. He succumbs to an inner impulse toward gently articulated lyricism, revealing just how many seemingly incongruent things this musician holds within himself. —*Suzanne Lorge*

Tempting to quip "Martin Denny for Gen Y," but every once in a while, these lo-fi flute-and-synth clouds really do take you somewhere. But André Benjamin's no Ingram Marshall. —*Paul de Barros*

Where's the flute? For a guy hyped on the spiritual power of his wooden pal, this digressive amble sure is bolstered by synths. That said, the ambient explorations stack up nicely, brokering super evocative textures. —*Jim Macnie*

Sullivan Fortner, *Solo Game*

This solo session reveals him for the keyboard monster that he is. The piano half is a marvel, while the electronic half takes that dazzle into technicolor. A landmark effort. —*J.D. Considine*

One of the few pianists out there who romps insouciantly with both hands through all the eras, Fortner nervously interrupts himself, making it feel like you're hearing him think out loud. Not so many pleasant surprises on the electric side, though. —*Paul de Barros*

Poise and lyricism are a heavenly combo. So are touch and technique. But here, the pianist reminds us of whimsy's value. From the unpredictable swerves of the solo piano pieces to the shifting motifs that constitute the multi-key montage, it's a hoot. —*Jim Macnie*

Joel Ross, *nublues*

That Ross and altoist Immanuel Wilkins are at the top of their games almost goes without saying. What is worth noting is how the rhythm section turns up the heat on an already sizzling session. —*J.D. Considine*

Joel Ross creates fascinating worlds. This latest release reveals a darker — though equally compelling — side to his musical persona as he wrestles with tension, mystery and pathos. —*Suzanne Lorge*

His most eloquent so far? The arrangements consistently foreground and background a variety of instruments — there's an orchestral vibe in play. And peppering the originals with Trane jewels adds a nice blend of history and familiarity. —*Jim Macnie*

Aaron Parks Little Big, *Live In Berlin*

Parks' electric quartet has deftly rehabilitated the flash and thunder of fusion, and despite the bootleg-quality sound, this live set shows they're even better out of the studio. —*J.D. Considine*

This record captures Parks in a comfortable vibe with his usual group, emboldening the daring side of their musicianship. The result is rampant improvisations, pounding grooves and flashes of unadulterated joy. —*Suzanne Lorge*

Ballsy move, releasing a live set recorded with an iPhone at Berlin's cozy Zig Zag club. OK, the result's a little tinny, but it feels like you're right there between the keyboard, guitar strings and snare, shivering in sympathy with the crowd. —*Paul de Barros*

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Luke Stewart Remembrance Quintet Featuring Daniel Carter
Do You Remember
SONBOY

★★★★

Free-jazz is a language, and Daniel Carter speaks it as fluently as anyone alive. A veteran of the New York underground, metaphorically and literally (his quartet TEST used to play in the city's subways), he's been on the scene since the '70s and played with everyone from Matthew Shipp and William Parker to Thurston Moore and Yo La Tengo. On this album, he's joined and celebrated by kindred spirits from a generation after his own: saxophonist and percussionist Jamal Moore and trumpeter Chris Williams are both multidisciplinary artists, and bassist Luke Stewart and drummer Tcheser Holmes are the engine driving the poetic free-jazz quintet Irreversible Entanglements.

The bulk of the album consists of five tracks running between six and 10 minutes, all seemingly improvised in discursive fashion. It's relatively low-stakes and chill, mostly just playing for the joy of it, and rendering that joy contagious. This is familiar territory for Carter — TEST and his other contemporaneous group, Other Dimensions In Music, were brilliant at drawing music patiently out of the air, conversing with the audience as eavesdroppers, and the same thing goes on here. Moore and Williams throw ideas back and forth, with Carter serving as guide and/or willing co-conspirator. Stewart and Holmes lay down powerful grooves at times but are every bit as comfortable creating a sense of no-time where anything can happen, then punctuating it or bringing it to a sharp, brooking-no-argument conclusion. —*Phil Freeman*

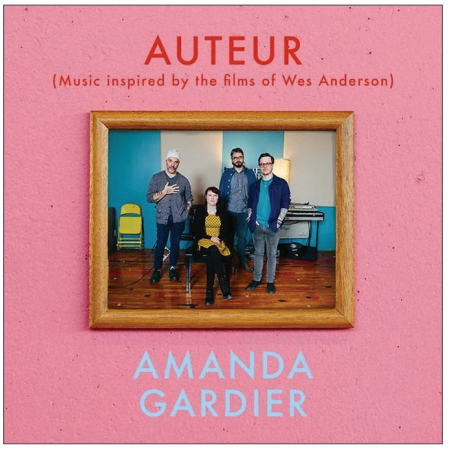
Do You Remember: Intro, Do You Remember?; Recollections; Home; Daniel Carter Remembers; Blessings; Pillars; Whirlwind; Outro, We Remember. (43:37)
Personnel: Daniel Carter, reeds; Jamal Moore, reeds and percussion; Chris Williams, trumpet; Luke Stewart, bass; Tcheser Holmes, drums.
Ordering info: lukestewart.bandcamp.com

Amanda Gardier
Auteur: Music Inspired By The Films Of Wes Anderson
INDEPENDENT RELEASE

★★★★

Alto saxophonist Amanda Gardier's singing tone and confident melodic flow star in this satisfying program of originals bearing something of the multilayered wit and cool symmetry favored by film director Wes Anderson. Well-supported by guitarist Charlie Ballantine, with whom she's recorded since 2015, ever-active drummer Dave King and sturdy anchor Jesse Wittman, Gardier commands dynamics and narrative-like arcs through tracks that have something of Anderson's characteristic polished whimsy tinged with melancholy and wonder, prompting reflection that leads beneath surfaces.

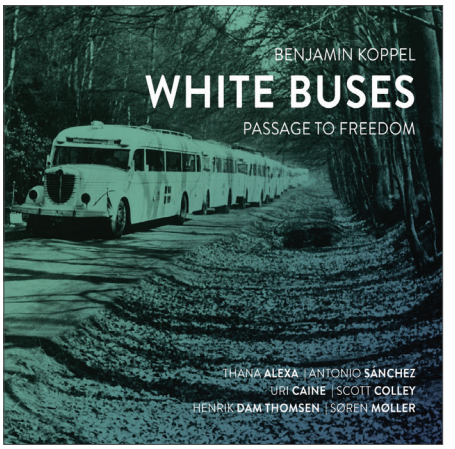
It's easy to enjoy the coherence of this quartet even if one knows nothing of the Anderson films each track refers to. You can make up your own plots based on the mastery of the saxophonist, a member of the U.S. Navy Band Commodores and occasional educator. Ballantine works in tandem with her to thicken the drawn lines, provide counterpoint or solo extensions. King keeps up an imaginatively busy but never overwhelming stream of comment, Wittman ably locking in with his own gentle, firm commentary.



The group conjures then navigates smooth time shifts, nuances of mood, turns of gritty power, fleeting passages of insistent repetition and a pervasive sense of self-understanding. Gardier always knows where she's going, as do her collaborators. Her third album as a leader, *Auteur* is a fine, propulsive show.

—*Howard Mandel*

Auteur: Music Inspired By The Films Of Wes Anderson: Coping For A Very Troubled Child; Let's Hope It's Got A Happy Ending; I Wonder If It Remembers Me; The Blue Of Winter; The Incarcerated Artist And His Muse; Electroshock Therapy; The Cycling Reporter; Order For Yourself; Green Line. (56:44)
Personnel: Gardier, alto saxophone; Dave King, drums; Charlie Ballantine, guitar; Jesse Wittman, bass.
Ordering info: agardier.com



Benjamin Koppel
White Buses: Passage To Freedom
COWBELL MUSIC

★★★½

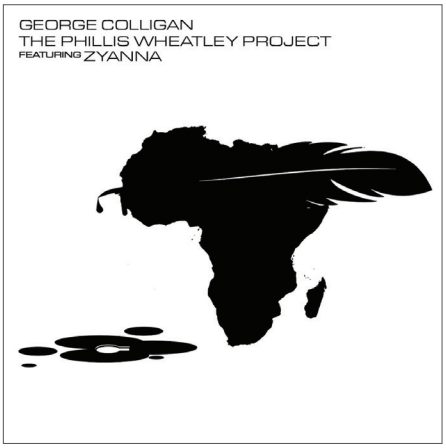
A poignant narrative of resilience, loss and joy, Danish composer and saxophonist Benjamin Koppel's latest album tells the story of a rescue operation led by the Red Cross during World War II that transported over 20,000 concentration camp prisoners out of Nazi Germany via white buses. *White Buses* artfully weaves recorded testimonies from living concentration camp survivors with programmatic, straight-ahead jazz compositions.

Structurally, *White Buses* flows like a story in three acts. The first act sets the scene, as an elderly man states, "There's a devil under the skin of any human being: beware, it never gets out!" Thana Alexa's haunting vocals undulate beneath Koppel's energetic, sinister saxophone lines and Uri Caine's bluesy piano. This act is the most experimental, with angular melodies, frenetic beats and ephemeral vocalizations. The gentle lilt of Henrik Dam Thomsen's cello and dramatic tonal poetry of Antonio Sanchez's drums are evocative beneath Alexa's vocals.

In the second act, the testimonials express confusion and disbelief at the arrival of the white buses. The third and final act explores the survivors' joy and shock as the white buses lead them home. The lived experiences that anchor *White Buses* give the record depth and gravitas, and Koppel and his all-star ensemble are able to achieve a striking balance between triumphant jubilation and sobering melancholy.

—*Ivana Ng*

White Buses–Passage To Freedom: Introduction–Testimonial I; The Devil Under The Skin; Testimonial II; The Woman With Her Violin; Testimonial III; I Was Terrified; Testimonial IV; Dreaming Of Food; Testimonial V; Two Birds In A Nest; Testimonial VI; The Planes In The Sky; Testimonial VII; Rumors; Testimonial VIII; Die Dänen Raus; Testimonial IX; My Father; Testimonial X; The White Bus; Testimonial XI; The Goodbye; Testimonial XII; Potsdam; Testimonial XIII; The Welcoming pt. 1; The Welcoming pt. 2; Testimonial XIV; Awake Or Dreaming; Testimonial XV; A Fantastic Miracle; Testimonial XVI; The Golden Carriage. (46:33)
Personnel: Benjamin Koppel, saxophone; Thana Alexa, vocals; Uri Caine, piano; Scott Colley, bass; Henrik Dam Thomsen, cello; Søren Møller, keys; Antonio Sanchez, drums.
Ordering info: cowbellmusic.dk



George Colligan
The Phyllis Wheatley Project Featuring Zyanna
PJCE
★★★½

Portland pianist George Colligan's latest work celebrates Phyllis Wheatley, a former slave who in the 1770s became the first Black author of a book of poetry in the United States. Colligan and Wheatley are kindred souls across the centuries.

Colligan's music contemporizes Wheatley's language in melodic, straightahead jazz, abstraction and spoken word. The subjects include Maecenas, a patron of poetry in ancient Rome; the grief a family experiences after the death of a child; and the feelings that washed over Wheatley as she was forced to leave her native West Africa for enslavement in America.

Drummer Dominick Branch launches it with "Ode To Neptune," the band swelling behind breathy vocalist Zyanna Melada and Noah Simpson's pushy trumpet. Simpson comes to dominate, soloing over bassist Garrett Baxter and Branch. Zyanna unfurls unfettered vocalese before Colligan solos, keeping the energy high before all join in for a final lick.

"On Virtue" is a brooding ballad featuring Simpson's lanky lines, rubato Colligan and the elastic Zyanna. Colligan's solo approaches the blues, and Simpson turns up the heat when the tune threatens to wander. "To A Lady And Her Children, On The Death Of Her Son And Their Brother" starts with bass and piano, and Zyanna colors it with sorrow. Colligan's icy chording is commanding, Baxter yaws and saws, and Zyanna pushes against Corrigan's scary current. Zyanna ends this long album with an angry, spoken-word track defying the racism that dogs this country to this day. *—Carlo Wolff*

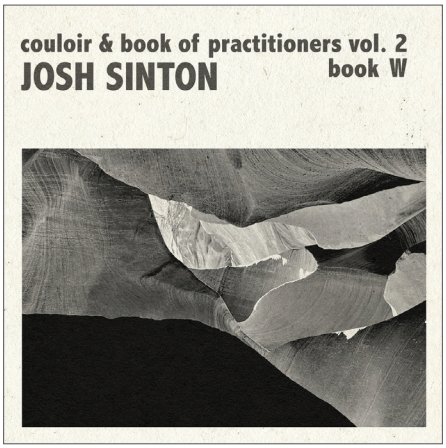
The Phyllis Wheatley Project: Ode To Neptune; On Recollection; On Virtue; Thoughts On The Works Of Providence; On Being Brought From Africa To America; On Imagination; To Maecenas; To A Lady And Her Children, On The Death Of Her Son And Their Brother; A Hymn to the Evening; On Being Brought From Africa To America (spoken word) (64:26)
Personnel: Garrett Baxter, bass; Dominick Branch, drums; George Colligan, piano; Zyanna Melada, vocals; Noah Simpson, trumpet.
Ordering info: pjce.bandcamp.com

Josh Sinton
Couloir/Book Of Practitioners, Volume 2, Book 'W'
FIP
★★★½

Is there a music format more divisive than the solo saxophone recording? Even widely admired musicians like Anthony Braxton and Roscoe Mitchell have split fans' approval when they've ventured alone into the studio.

Josh Sinton has contributed to works by creative artists like Darcy James Argue and Nate Wooley. He's dabbled before in the solo world, but a double solo release is a bold statement.

The second volume of *Book Of Practitioners* follows on his 2022 release of *Book 'H'* and reflects his concentration on Steve Lacy's practice études, which began when Sinton was a student at New England Conservatory. Since then, he's been honing his work: changing keys and some of Lacy's original phrasing to better suit the larger horn. At points, these pieces seem like practice exercises, but they can also bloom in unexpected ways, as when "Whoops" exposes Sinton's gorgeous, grainy, mid-range voice, or in the scope of harmonic movement displayed in "Waterline." And, even when they seem more like technical drawings than Impressionist paintings, there's much to admire in the way



Sinton moves seamlessly through the work.

While *Book W* is a showcase for Sinton's technique, *Couloir* allows him to demonstrate the scope of his compositional and improvisational skills. Whether burbling a breathy, low tone or roaring through scorching multiphonics, Sinton displays exceptional technique. There's also no question that some parts of this journey catch the ear more than others. *—James Hale*

Couloir/Book Of Practitioners, Volume 2, Book 'W': Rift; Scar; Scission; Scree; Talis; Thrutch; Clough; Arroyo; Foramen; Abyss; Interstice; Defile; Gill; Flume; Seam. Disc 2: Willy-Nilly (to Ralph Richardson); Whoosh (to George Orwell); Whoops (to Peter Sellers); Waterline (to Lennie Tristano); Wrinkles (to Orson Welles); Windfall (to Jerome E. Kern). (54:16/41:22)
Personnel: Josh Sinton, baritone saxophone.
Ordering info: joshsinton.bandcamp.com

Micah Thomas
Reveal
ARTWORK
★★★★

In the liner notes for *Reveal*, his second piano trio album, 26-year-old Micah Thomas states that in his experience, revelation comes not "from the introduction of new material, but rather from experiencing already known material from a different point of view." On the acclaimed 2022 release *Piano Solo*, Thomas displayed his exhaustive connection to a wide timeline of jazz and Euro-classical piano dialects that he deployed while refracting a dozen jazz and songbook standards into his already mature, individualistic voice.

Reveal finds Thomas and his highly interactive working band of several years applying that probing aesthetic as they dissect eight diverse originals, mostly written during a year-long COVID quarantine in Ohio with his family. The pieces platform the capacious stylistic erudition, imaginative orchestrations, unorthodox phrasing, elegant voice leading, well-calibrated touch and cohesive narrative impulses that have elicited public encomia from an elite cohort of hard-to-impress, sonic science-oriented fellow practitioners. No matter how abstract the flow, they contain an inner logic and abiding melodic focus that will also keep "civilians" on track.

These attributes undoubtedly grabbed the attention of Artwork proprietor Jean-Philippe Allard, the eminent jazz auteur who produced multiple landmark sessions by deep-rooted, no-boundaries, spirit-motivated grandmasters Hank Jones, Randy Weston, Kenny Barron, Abbey Lincoln and Charlie Haden during the 1990s and 2000s. Allard's imprimatur indicates that, in time, Thomas may well deserve inclusion with these distinguished predecessors in the jazz piano continuum.

—Ted Panken

Reveal: Little Doctor (take 2); Look At The Birds; Eros; Sacred Memory; Little Doctor (take 1); Lightning; Stars; Troubled Mind; Denardin. (67:43)
Personnel: Micah Thomas, piano; Dean Torrey, bass; Kayvon Gordon, drums.
Ordering info: micah.io

Ancestors on the Ivories

Some of the latest historical piano-led jazz releases take listeners on a romp across the globe (to experience live performances laid down from Portland to Switzerland to Denmark), along the way shedding new light on the legacy of piano masters in a primarily cool mode, each supported by classic configurations.

The warmth and charm of **Oscar Peterson**'s so-called "classic trio" (featuring Ray Brown on bass and Ed Thigpen on drums) are well represented in a set titled ***Con Alma: Live in Lugano, 1964*** **(Mack Avenue; 43:54 ★★★★)**. The trio also embodies a well-earned tightness, a unit that played nearly nightly. In fact, according to Peterson's memoirs, after their sets, the three of them would sip coffee until the staff left, and then rehearse from 4:30 to 7 a.m. Highlights include a refined yet energetic live version of the classic "Con Alma," as well as a version on Bill Evans's standard "Waltz For Debby" (which was recorded by Peterson in studio for the 1962 album *Affinity*).

Ordering info: oscarpeterson.bandcamp.com

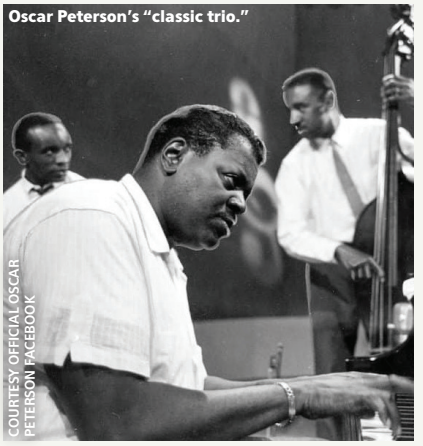
Speaking of "Waltz For Debby," a newly unearthed 1964 set by **Bill Evans** — ***Tales: Live In Copenhagen (1964)*** **(Elemental; 51:41 ★★★★★)** — presents yet another interpretation from Evans of the classic tune. Originally recorded as a solo piece, arguably his most famous rendering was recorded at the Village Vanguard on 1961 and released on his eponymous 1962 live recording. This version of the song, after nearly a decade in Evans' repertoire, feels loose and easy, yet precise. Tales was essentially culled from recordings in the private collection of Danish jazz musician Ole Matthiessen contains a varied yet consistently moody grouping of cuts, including a couple of sugar-sweet takes of "How My Heart Sings" (which first appeared on Evans' 1962 *Moonbeams*) and also includes a bonus track recorded in November 1969, a romantic take on "'Round Midnight" (a composition that was present in a different version on *Trio '65*).

Another highlight of the set is "I Didn't Know What Time It Was," a cut that quickly opens up like a blossom from a lucid whisper to a slinky swing. This grouping, featuring drummer Larry Bunker and bassist Chuck Israels, was not to last: they only recorded together from 1963 until 1966.

Ordering info: elemental-music.com

Meanwhile, an early **Dave Brubeck Quartet** is presented on ***From The Northwest 1959*** **(Brubeck Editions; 56:51 ★★★★)**, recorded by now-iconic recording engineer Wally Heider (perhaps best known for his 1960s and 1970s work with countercultural Bay Area artists such as The Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane and Santana.) Back in 1959, early in his career, equipped with an Ampex two-track tape recorder and two high-quality Telefunken microphones, he captured the group (Joe Morello on drums, Brubeck, Eugene Wright on bass and Paul Desmond on saxophone) at the now-defunct Multnomah Hotel in Portland on April 4, 1959, and in the auditorium at Portland's Clark College the following day. The resulting tracks contain a version of "These Foolish Things" and an early version of "Gone With The Wind." It's a rare opportunity to hear the band a mere four months before the quartet recorded their eternal album *Time Out*; but those looking to hear some of the off-kilter time signature experimentation that made *Time Out* so singular might be disappointed to find a set of fairly straightahead crowd-pleasers. Nevertheless, the band itself is characteristically breezy and bristling with ideas, recorded in pristine quality.

Ordering info: brubeckeditions.com



Oscar Peterson's "classic trio."

COURTESY OFFICIAL OSCAR PETERSON FACEBOOK

Notes On Ornette **(Steeplechase; 44:16 ★★★½)** by **Paul Bley** is somewhat of an outlier among this bunch, as the set is a rerelease of a studio recording that was originally issued in 1998. Although the most contemporary set mentioned here, comprised almost exclusively of Ornette Coleman compositions, the well-reviewed collection was fairly hard to come by. Paul Bley's piano work is sparkling, particularly on tracks such as "Lorraine" and the sole Bley composition included here, the lightly habanero-tinged "Aarp."

Ordering info: steeplechase.dk

Ultimately, while three of these recordings are never-before-released live takes from charmed eras of their respective careers, all four clearly expose fresh facets of their bandleader's already brilliant legacies. **DB**

David Gibson
Fellowship
IMANI
★★★★

Oklahoma-born trombonist-arranger David Gibson has spent quality time working with Slide Hampton, George Gee and Orrin Evans' Captain Black Big Band. He has a very attractive, focused open horn sound, especially in the upper register, heard to great advantage on "Disquietude," with its chordal nod to "Freedom Jazz Dance" and McCoy Tyner changes and feel. He is aided by a crackling, whip-smart rhythm section.

The program is all Gibson originals. "Discursiveness" showcases Gibson, pianist Davis Whitfield and bassist Joseph Lepore displaying deep solo chops on a blues-based roundelay. Interesting that a horn player would write a composition titled "Beyond Breath," but it has enigma and unresolved mystery.

There are flashes of technical brilliance on "Meek's Wrath," with Gibson working to accelerate speed on the turnarounds and alternating them with long-held notes. "Waiting For Patience" is another high point: It is not just a spotlight for leader with rhythm section but offers seamless integration of theme and variation. Meanwhile, the title track is a lazy ballad just right for a sultry summer afternoon. Gibson and Whitfield take languid, pretty solos built on three-note ascending patterns.

This is a real dyed-in-the-wool New York jazz group, led by an experienced and smart player and arranger, and it's not hard to hear how this band has built a following over the years at Smalls and other Big Apple hotspots. It's also not hard to hear why pianist, composer and bandleader Orrin Evans, Gibson's erstwhile employer, has taken the initiative to record this sterling group for his own Imani label. —*Larry Appelbaum*

Fellowship: Disquietude; Beyond Breath; Meek's Wrath; Discursiveness; Persist; Waiting For Patience; Fellowship. (49:32)
Personnel: David Gibson, trombone; Davis Whitfield, piano; Joseph Lepore, bass; Kush Abadey, drums.

Ordering info: imanirecords.bandcamp.com

Jon Irabagon
Survivalism
IRRABAGAST
★★★½

Jon Irabagon's Outright!
Recharge The Blade
IRRABAGAST
★★★★

The solo *Survivalism* was recorded when extreme virtuoso saxophonist Jon Irabagon had moved to Igloo, South Dakota, during the lockdown times, investigating the soprillo, surely the smallest (and most technically challenging) of all saxophones. He recorded in two underground bunkers; their reverberations become equal partners with the soprillo, creating a kind of virtual duo.

Irabagon's playing here has a lot of content, substance and depth compared to many other solo ventures. But it's not just the playing to consider, it's the complete conceptual surround: the location, the story behind the bunkers (see Irabagon's intriguing notes) and even the evocative titles. Your scribe awards an extra star due to these factors, which make an admittedly experimental session actively entertaining.

Outright! has existed for 15 years, producing a trilogy that features Irabagon on alto, tenor and now soprano. Its current lineup is completely new: Ray Anderson, Matt Mitchell, Chris Lightcap and Dan Weiss. Irabagon is one of the few players to hold equal love for the mainstream and the out-there, and Outright! observes jazz structure while making some wild diversions.

The title suite is in nine parts and, despite any abstract trimmings, this is swingin' stuff. There's an enthusiastic rapport between the leader and trombonist Anderson, with Mitchell trilling rapid embellishments in their wake, Lightcap and Weiss propelling hard. On "Très Bechet" Anderson delivers a high-toned solo, then Irabagon slips ribbons around the melody. "War Suite" closes out, with Ben Monder's guest guitar central to "Quorum Call." The final "Welcome Parade" is a smooth-jazz anthem, with a crowd of guesting players pursuing freeness in the background. This suite doesn't approach the extended excellence of *Recharge The Blade*, but it provides an effective wind-down. —*Martin Longley*

Survivalism: The Pilot's Family; W.R.O.L.; "Doom! Doom! Doom! Something Seems To Whisper It In The Very Dark Trees Of America"; Doom Boom; Reflections; H.N.W.I.; How To Eat A Pine Tree To Survive; Duke Ellington's Sound Of Love. (48:15)
Personnel: Jon Irabagon, soprillo saxophone, game calls.
Recharge The Blade: Kilgrave Part 1; Blood Eagle; Keelhauling; Nightshade; Kilgrave Part 2; Recharge The Blade; Très Bechet; Tsar; Kilgrave Part 3; Quorum Call; We'll Meet Again; Welcome Parade. (68:29)
Personnel: Jon Irabagon, soprano saxophone; Ray Anderson, trombone; Matt Mitchell, piano, Fender Rhodes, Moog Model D; Chris Lightcap, acoustic /electric basses; Dan Weiss, drums; Ben Monder, guitar (10); Chris Cash, drums, bass, guitars, programming (12); The Trans-Atlantic Luxury Cruise Line Cigar Lounge All-Stars (12).
Ordering info: jonirabagon.bandcamp.com

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The Continental Drift

Veteran British pianist Pat Thomas has finally been attracting greater international attention thanks to his work in the athletic quartet Ahmed, which unleashes ferocious set-long performances using single, indelible melodic lines penned by the late bassist/oudist Ahmed Abdul-Malik as a launchpad.

Three-quarters of that band — Thomas, bassist Joel Grip and drummer Antonin Gerbal — bring the same improvisational fire to their trio **Ism**, but they dispense with any sort of preset material, resulting in a more elastic strain of intensity. Thomas flexes his jazz roots across the group's ***Maua*** **(577; 47:37 ★★★★)**, fluidly injecting quotes from "Space Is The Place," "Caravan" and "Billy Boy" within the brisk 41-minute title piece. The imperturbable rhythm deftly section sets up the pianist with an ultra-propulsive swing, through seamless peaks and valleys. The music was recorded live in 2022 at the tiny Berlin venue Au Topsi Pohl — which has sadly since been shuttered — with a rented Bösendörfer that barely fit on stage but produced the kaleidoscopic depth captured on the recording.

Ordering info: 577records.bandcamp.com

Thomas is one of four duo partners of British saxophonist **John Butcher** on ***Lower Marsh*** **(Ni Vu Ni Connu; 37:35 ★★★★)**, one of two new recordings from the latter on the imprint (there's also a quartet date). But hearing Butcher in different pairings allows the listener to notice his versatility more clearly, adapting his sound — but not his sturdy aesthetic — to each instrumental context. With Thomas, who switches from piano to abstract electronics, he unspools extended passages on soprano, threading the ominous, globular gauntlet of noise shaped by his partner, while he embraces a far more austere, parched series of phrases and interactions with Davies. All of the music was recorded at the London space Iklectic, a venue celebrated in the liner notes by Clive Bell.

Ordering info: johnbutcher.org.uk

The Oslo-based Danish saxophonist Signe Emmeluth has been turning heads across Europe for the last four or five years, straddling the divide between fiery free improvisation and searing post-bop. Her quartet **Emmeluth's Amoeba** brings free-jazz fury to original tunes that function like oblique puzzles on the group's third album ***Nonsense*** **(Moserobie; 39:53 ★★★★)**. Joined by drummer Ole Mofjell, guitarist Karl Borjå and pianist Christian Balvig, it almost sounds like a prog-rock band at times, with a punishing attack that sometimes seems on the verge of disintegration. But

TORE SÆTRE / WIKIMEDIA

Signe Emmeluth, of Emmeluth's Amoeba.

beneath the aggression is a remarkable cubist construction, with musicians navigating jagged arrangements that collide lines of fractured counterpoint amid texturally ravishing backgrounds and rambunctious energy. While the drummer injects almost brutish power to proceedings, he nonetheless operates with nonchalant precision, putting the weight of the band on his back and allowing both Borjå and Balvig to shape deliciously strange patterns that articulate the leader's compositional ideas.

Ordering info: signeemmeluth.bandcamp.com

Emmeluth also turns up on the beguiling new album from keyboardist **Jonas Cambien**, a Belgian native who's long worked in Norway. His polymath interests are on full display on the eponymous debut from his new quartet, ***Maca Conu*** **(Clean Feed; 46:45 ★★★½)**, not only in the way he elides any clear definitions between post-bop orthodoxy, prog-rock and new music, all dispatched with a garage-rock immediacy, but also through his nonchalant doubling on piano and AceTone 5 organ; on one track he even plays soprano saxophone.

Driven by the versatile, imperturbable rhythm section of bassist Ingebrigt Håker Flaten and drummer Andreas Wildhagen, who latch onto a minimalist motorik rock groove more than they unleash any kind of swing, the music eschews clear stylistic markers, even though the entire endeavor is fueled by high-end improvisation. The shape-shifting compositions pivot between groove and tone seamlessly, whether clinging to the almost metronomic, tightly coiled rhythm pulsing within the relentlessly circling "Holy Fishtail" or the staccato stammer of "Kontrankten." Within a specific rhythmic conception, the melodies spill mischievously over the edges. **DB**

Ordering info: jonascambien.com

Willie Morris
Attentive Listening
POSI-TONE
★★★½

An up-and-coming tenor saxophonist with four previous Posi-Tone releases, Willie Morris considers Joe Henderson to be one of his influences, although at this early stage he already has a sound of his own.

On *Attentive Listening*, Morris is joined by a top-notch quartet/quintet that includes pianist Jon Davis, bassist Boris Kozlov, drummer Rudy Royston and on some selections altoist Patrick Cornelius. The latter is a major asset whenever he appears and Davis also takes consistently creative solos.

The first half of the set comprises five of the leader's originals. They have philosophical titles dealing with the folly of youth, the last moments of life when coherence briefly returns and the importance of evolving from an imitator to an original. While the origins of the titles are interesting, the music has a life of its own.

The post-bop music includes the moody ballad "Terminal Lucidity," a swinging "The Imitation Game," and a modern hard bop romp on "Delusions Of Understanding." The other selections, two originals apiece by Cornelius and Davis plus Kenny Dorham's "La Mesah," are generally a bit more lighthearted with the Brazilian-flavored "Leaving Paradise" (which has an attractive blend of Morris' tenor with Cornelius' flute), the joyful jam through "Rhythm" changes ("Et Tu, Caribou") and the closing "Daly Minor Blues" are the highlights.

While none of these songs are destined to become standards, it seems quite certain that Willie Morris will become an increasingly familiar name to jazz listeners for years to come. *—Scott Yanow*

Attentive Listening: Water Fountain Of Youth; Terminal Lucidity; The Imitation Game; To Worlds Unknown; Delusion Of Understanding; Leaving Paradise; Moving Right Along; La Mesha; Et Tu, Caribou; Daly Minor Blues. (55:27)
Personnel: Willie Morris, tenor saxophone; Patrick Cordelius, alto saxophone, alto flute; Jon Davis, piano; Boris Kozlov, bass; Rudy Royston, drums, percussion.

Ordering info: posi-tone.com

Charles Chen
Charles, Play!
CELLAR MUSIC

★★★★

There is a gleeful and serious spirit in pianist Charles Chen's playing that sucks you in right from the first note of *Charles, Play!* Chen's intent for this album was to experiment with various jazz forms and publicly display his dexterity as an up-and-coming pianist. Surprisingly, the recording is Chen's debut as a leader. He may be new to leading his band on record, but he knows that the key to longevity in jazz is to be surrounded by seasoned musicians.

Bassist Peter Washington, drummer Kenny Washington and saxophonist Ralph Moore join Chen. The band ventures into melodic shuffles, misty ballads, waltz and soul-soothing standards on this debut. Cedar Walton must have had an indelible influence on Chen. Throughout this recording, Chen's melodic sensibility is similar to Walton's command. For comparison evidence, check out Chen's wise-beyond-his-years approach and harmonic control and acumen on the opener "How About You." On "Simple Pleasure," another one of Walton's well-known tunes, the zoom lens is focused on Moore. His solo is supple and organic.

Chen also showcases his compositional skills on his original waltz "Chopin" and the enticing "Peter And The Big Bad Wolf," which features an exciting cat-and-mouse chase between saxophone and bass.

Charles, Play! is a rock-solid mission statement by a rising jazz pianist with an old soul. The cohesiveness of the band pairs perfectly with Chen's expressive playing.

—Veronica Johnson

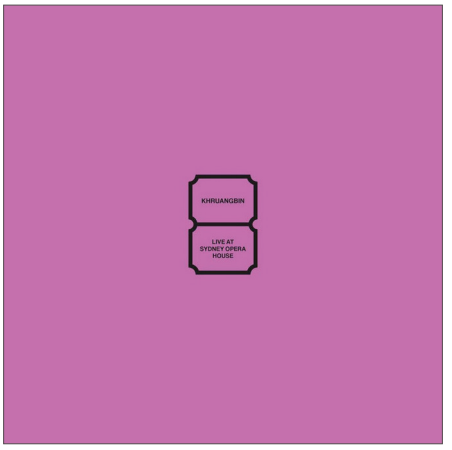
Charles, Play!: How About You; Be My Love; Peter And The Big Bad Wolf; These Foolish Things; Swing State; Passport; Chopin; Golson; Simple Pleasure. (47:14)
Personnel: Charles Chen, piano; Ralph Moore, tenor saxophone; Peter Washington, bass; Kenny Washington, drums.
Ordering info: cellarlive.com

Khruangbin
Live At Sydney Opera House
DEAD OCEANS

★★★½

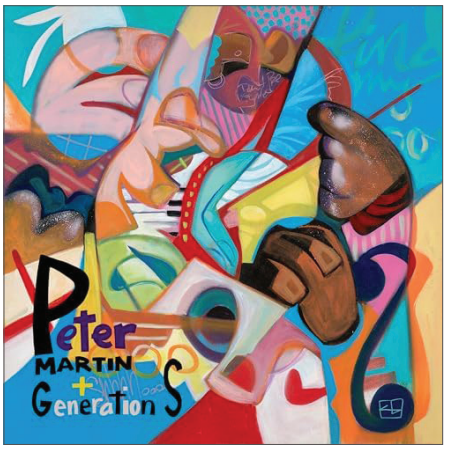
Khruangbin's (pronounced KROO-ng-bin) latest is a hefty 17-track record capturing music from their three-night run at the Sydney Opera House. While it would be best to hear the music through the majesty of the famed venue's acoustics, the audio is refined and well represented here: excellent recording, mixing, and mastering strengthening the album's appeal. Krhuangbin's ambition as a live performing unit shines with this capstone to their four other live releases in 2023 and makes for an excellent way to convince a new fan to get a concert ticket for themselves.

Even a solid audio recording can't easily convey the magic of live performance. Still, Khruangbin's shrewd stylistic blending is on full display. Guitar tones change their shape, length, pitch, and decay like swirls of color in a splash of oil: sharp and thin to lean into the rhythmic drive of funk like on "Time (You and I)"; longer, smoother and slower to foster a soulful swing on "Shida"; and densely distorted with a jagged timbre on "Evan Finds The Third Room," combining with high-pitched vocals to give a disco vibe. The satisfying dry and snappy tone of DJ Johnson's snare provides simultaneous consistency and contrast throughout much of the record, alongside the subtle but crucial underpinning of Laura Lee Ochoa's clean and clear bass. That said, even with Khruangbin's musical diversity and emotional energy, sometimes the very slow-burning payoff to hear a song open up can leave the music susceptible to feeling stale.



—Kira Grunenberg

Live At Sydney Opera Houe: The Number 3; The Number 4; August 10 / Master of Life; Two Fish And An Elephant; White Gloves; First Class; So We Won't Forget; Shida; Friday Morning; Lady And Man; Pelota; Evan Finds The Third Room; Maria Tambien; Time (You And I); People Everywhere (Shifting Sands Remix); A Calf Born In Winter; Zionsville. (81:00)
Personnel: Laura Lee Ochoa, bass, vocals; Mark Speer, guitar, vocals; DJ Johnson, drums, keyboardss, vocals.
Ordering info: deadoceans.com



Peter Martin
Generation S
OPEN STUDIO

★★★★

At a time in the world — and in jazz — when the generations can feel so cut off from one another, pianist Peter Martin releases *Generation S*, a record of original compositions that builds bridges between veteran Gen-Xers Martin, bassist Reuben Rogers and drummer Gregory Hutchinson, and Gen-Z saxophone phenom Sarah Hanahan.

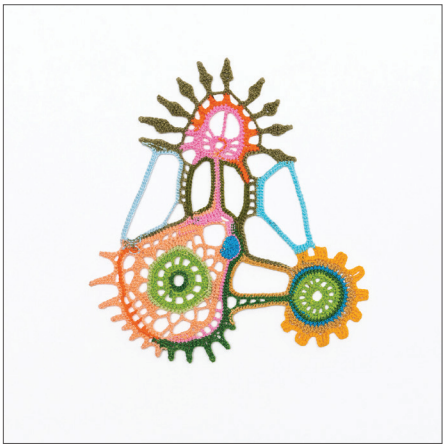
Generation S is Martin's name for this multi-generational band and record, which sets out to explore the question: What does jazz in 2023 sound like? The record's answer involves the blending of influences, including classic bebop, swing, and contemporary jazz, Latin, blues and R&B, and an emphasis on the band's collective sound over the statement of any individual musician.

Stand-out tracks include the rhythm-section-led "That's What's Up," with its classic bluesy groove, and the waltz-y "Path Adjacent," with a lush, winding melody and R&B-inflected piano intro. Likewise, there's the playfully pentatonic "Gratitude In Motion" and the eponymous track "Generation S," both of which play with odd meters, spacious soundscapes and adventurous "outside" soloing. The record also sprinkles in some refreshing change-ups, like the sprightly Latin tune "Groove Echo Chamber."

Throughout, the nimble, emotive playing of Hanahan, who was recently named one of *NPR Jazz Night in America*'s "30 Under 30 Youngbloods," is thrilling, as is the cohesion and infectious enjoyment of the band, which recorded with no edits or second takes. Intricate yet relaxed, *Generation S* succeeds beautifully in capturing the unedited magic and fresh inspired dialogue between these talented intergenerational musicians.

—Alexa Peters

Generation S: Generation S; That's What's Up; Path Adjacent; Groove Echo Chamber; Gratitude In Motion; Abstract Courage; Alfred T; Finding Our Infinity. (47:39)
Personnel: Peter Martin, piano; Sarah Hanahan, saxophone; Rueben Rogers, bass; Gregory Hutchinson, drums.
Ordering info: openstudiojazz.com



Stirrup
Picks Up The Thread
EARS & EYES
★★★★

The string-heavy lineup of Stirrup might trigger associations to chamber jazz, but even a brief listen to *Picks Up The Thread* will put paid to that notion. Cellist Fred Lonberg-Holm mixes vibrant acoustic tones with refracted electronic treatments. Bassist Nick Macri and drummer Charles Rumback indulge a lusty looseness, letting their rhythms roll as well as swing. Collectively, they have participated in a myriad of structured and free improvisational settings.

But at Stirrup's core is a deep respect for song structures. The trio first convened as the backing band for Horses Ha, the country-tinged duo of Chicago-based vocalists James Elkington and Janet Beveridge Bean, and the melodic directness of the group's original tunes is informed by each musician's experiences accompanying and arranging for singers.

As the title suggests, *Picks Up The Thread* sustains continuity with Stirrup's previous four albums, but also takes things somewhere else. On its predecessor, *The Avondale Addition*, Stirrup forsook tunes to court the wildness of conducted improvisation. This time, the chaos is packed back into the tunes. Lonberg-Holm's "e320" begins and ends with bowed statements of a subdued air. In between, the rhythm section leans into a menacing groove while Lonberg-Holm slashes at his strings like they've done them wrong. And while Macri's "Last Year's Blues" is held together by a stately groove, the musicians abandon it repeatedly to investigate rustling textures and grinding, distorted breakdowns. Fearlessly swinging between cohesion and breakdown, these performances are infused with a tension that charges even the most melodic moments. *—Bill Meyer*

Picks Up The Thread: Last Year's Blues; Chili Cot; Azul Arnos; Made In The Shade; e320. (42:35)
Personnel: Fred Lonberg-Holm, cello, electronics; Nick Macri, bass; Charles Rumback, drums.

Ordering info: earsandeyesrecords.com

Don Thompson & Rob Piltch
Bells… Now And Then
MODICA MUSIC
★★★½

Gentle, sweet and simple, Don Thompson and Rob Piltch's *Bells… Now And Then* is not a flashy duo album. Thompson and Piltch almost luxuriate together in how lovely they sound, like an evening at a cocktail lounge where the audience is practically incidental but still reaping the benefits of being in the room.

There are few moments that either try one's patience or raise one's heart rate. Even the lively "Stratford Stomp" is pretty sedate, a woogie with the boogie not included. "Nexus" is the only other aberration: four and a half minutes of Piltch nudging the effects pedals while Thompson stretches on the vibes. It's the only real left turn on the whole album, one that feels both akin to this collection of works and extremely out of place amidst the other 10 tracks.

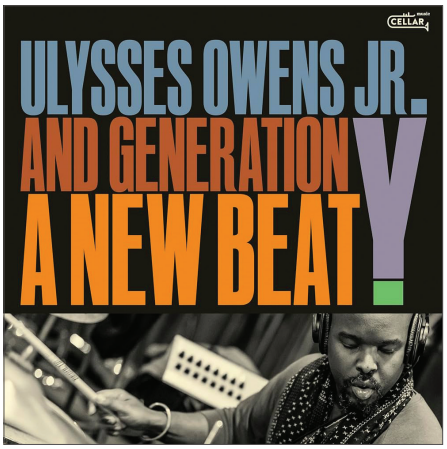
It gives way easily enough to the subsequent tune, "Chant," the album finding its even-keeled footing once again. But even when it changes up the mood, it doesn't stay there long; it's as if the pair is just as uncomfortable getting weird or hype as the listener has become accustomed over the bulk of the hour.

All in all, *Bells… Now and Then* doesn't rock the boat because it's meant to float down a lazy river. Even the surface's plastic sheen when the waters are still is a time to relax in the flow until the current picks up again. It's best not to worry too much about it. These two musicians certainly aren't.

—Anthony Dean-Harris

Bells... Now and Then: Circles; Caribe; September; Stratford Stomp; Bells; Suite: Kyoto; Suite: Moon Dance; Suite: Red Dragon Fly; Suite: Nexus; Suite: Chant; 11 Days Gone By. (52:35)
Personnel: Don Thompson, piano, bass, vibes; Rob Piltch, guitars.

Ordering info: modicamusic.bandcamp.com



Ulysses Owens Jr. and Generation Y
A New Beat
CELLAR MUSIC
★★★★

Though the album is entitled *A New Beat*, Ulysses Owens Jr. and Generation Y give more than a nod to the old beats, and they have chosen several compositions to interpret those golden days of hard bop and beyond.

They open with "Sticks" by the Adderley brothers, and Nat would certainly appreciate the ferocity of Benny Benack III's trumpet, which Anthony Hervey continues on "Better Days." It's not easy to hear the difference in their skillful performances as they practically alternate on the eight tracks.

One highlight of "London Towne" is the rippling piano and drum exchange between Owens Jr. and Luther Allison; that tuneful tonality is further explored in "Until I See You Again," a warm ballad where Sarah Hanahan delivers layers of introspective saxophone licks. She showcases her bop chops on "Bird Lives," a Jackie McLean creation that for this moment belongs to her.

A blues interlude occurs with Milton Suggs as the lilt of his baritone embraces "Heart Full Of Rhythm," and an encore from him may be among the album's requests. Between Owens' intro on "Sticks" to his outro on "Chicken An' Dumplings," a Roy Bryant staple, he and Generation Y traverse an amazing swath of genres and iconic composers — including Roy Hargrove's "Soulful," which is that and much more. They put a new beat and a fresh gloss on a collection of timeless chestnuts.

If, as you listen, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers come to mind, then you're on the right track. *—Herb Boyd*

A New Beat: Sticks; Better Days; London Towne; Until I See You Again; Soulful; Heart Full Of Rhythm; Bird Lives; Chicken An' Dumplings. (55:05)
Personnel: Ulysses Owens Jr., drums; Sarah Hanahan (1–7), Erena Terakubo (8), alto saxophone; Benny Benack III (1, 3, 6, 7), Anthony Hervey (2, 4, 5, 8), trumpet; Luther Allison (1, 3–5, 8), Tyler Bullock (2, 8), piano; Philip Norris (1–7), Ryoma Takenaga (8), bass; Milton Suggs, vocal (6).

Ordering info: ulyssesowensjr.bandcamp.com

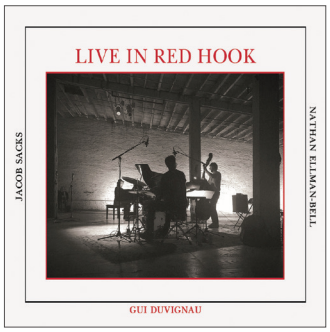
Tima Volozh
Jubilee
SHIFTING PARADIGM
★★★★

Apart from a couple of obvious personnel connections, the strongest link to Paul Motian's Electric Bebop Band comes on the staple "Star Eyes," freshly reimagined and rewired with a long rhythmic line that refocuses attention on some deceptively straightforward rhythms running through the young Brooklyn-based Russian's fine debut. "Adoration Of The Earth," a brilliantly realised meditation on the opening of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, comes from a source as international as can be imagined, a piece of music in which beauty, vitality, promise, brutality and death are all proximate. There are echoes of traditional Brazilian song, a superb reading of McCoy Tyner's timeless ballad "Aisha," a wholly reconstructed "Evidence" and, in "Mumbo Jumbo," a direct tribute to Motian.

Time is the single nonfungible currency here. Everything Volozh does seems to inhabit deep time: his own past, a still undetermined future, suspended moments that hold in the mind after the music ostensibly stops. This is a short album in stopwatch terms, but it packs gyres and pinwheels of action into its modest length. The real compliment for Volozh would be "time-filled," and as such *Jubilee*, with its implication of redemption as well as celebration, is the perfect title. —*Brian Morton*

Jubilee: Adoration Of The Earth; Vortex; Lá Lauê; Star Eyes; Aisha; Mumbo Jumbo; Evidence. (38:24)
Personnel: Tima Volozh, drums; Timo Vollbrecht, tenor saxophone; Noah Franche-Nolan, piano; Brad Shepik, guitar; Jerome Harris, bass.
Ordering info: shiftingparadigmrecords.com

Gui Duvignau
Live In Red Hook
SUNNYSIDE
★★★★



There are many takeaways from bassist Gui Duvignau's latest record, *Live In Red Hook*. Nothing in the jazz world and larger music industry has conspired to diminish the magic of the live recording. It is still one of the most powerful spaces to not only showcase one's chops as it were; it also remains as a repository of the flashes of brilliance that mark improvisation as one of the music's most sacred hallmarks.

Accompanied by Jacob Sacks on piano and Nathan Elman-Bell on drums, this trio ably fills Brooklyn's rustic Coffey Street Studio with the flourish of their improvisations. Indeed, no practice sessions preceded the recording dates. This recording is almost purely in the moment. At times one even forgets that it is "live," as the engineering and mastering preserved the beauty of the moment.

The other takeaway is Duvignau's compositional prowess. Most of these tunes are originals that offer up traces of his mentors and inspirations, including everyone from Billy Drewes and Ron Carter to Alexander Scriabin and Charles Mingus. But these compositions are not simple attempts to rewrite the "classics." Rather, what we find here is Duvignau forging a style all his own — one that's well worth the listen. —*Joshua Myers*

Live In Red Hook: Idée Fixe; Right, Wow!; Cadê; Closing; Miniature For Drums; One At A Time; Eighty-One; Deixa; Still Untitled; Up And Down; Scriabingus. (55:43)
Personnel: Gui Duvignau, bass; Jacob Sacks, piano; Nathan Ellman-Bell, drums.
Ordering info: sunnysiderecords.com

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LANDON ENTWISTLE

Canadian Jeff Rogers channels the Memphis blues.

Memphis Calling: Beale Street Mess Around Yields Blues Bounty

Various Artists: *The Memphis Blues Box* (Bear Family; 25:31:48 ★★★★½) Germany-based Bear Family Records, specializing in boxed sets, has outdone itself. Meticulously organized by English music historian Martin Hawkins, the colossal 8-pound *Memphis Blues Box* has 20 CDs storing 534 remastered songs originally issued as 78s or 45s between 1914 and 1969. Also included is a 360-page hardbound book stuffed to the seams with essays, musician profiles, song information and almost 900 photos, including record label images and maps. *TMBB* is a shoo-in for best-of-the-year lists.

This sweeping compendium, its tracks ordered by year of release, uses Discs 1–11 to survey the Memphis recording studio action before World War II; hundreds of predominantly Black and male musicians ply their talent in blues, country, jug band, string band, hokum, medicine show, gospel, ragtime, barrelhouse, New Orleans and swing jazz. Discs 12–20, covering postwar activity, presents proponents of urban blues, R&B, nascent rock 'n' roll including Sun rockabilly and Stax soul. The whole strongbox of tunes — about 90% of them with their appeal hardly undiminished by the passage of time — swaddles the hardy listener in its embrace for about 24 hours.

The genius of certain men and women makes their performances jump out from those of less animated talent. The Memphis Jug Band and Cannon's Jug Stompers are the outstanding jug-kazoo-harmonica groups. On 33 songs, singer-guitarist Memphis Minnie makes a case for royal reputation with technique and creativity at the service of her inimitable personality. Country blues master Sleepy John Estes' dozen songs, seeded in the cotton fields, incarnate his full heart and folksy musical intelligence. Young disc jockey B.B. King debuts with 1949's "Miss Martha King," then offers 13 more assertions of his singular artistic vision.

Other central forces showing their mighty stuff include Jimmie Lunceford, Furry Lewis, Bukka White, Howlin' Wolf, Rosco Gordon, Big Walter Horton, Memphis Slim, Ma Rainey, Willie Mitchell, Ike Turner, Rufus Thomas, James Cotton, Albert King, Little Milton and Bobby Bland. Not to forget Elvis Presley and Booker T. and the MGs.

No longer shrouded in the shadows is a crowd of lesser lights. Frank Stokes of the Beale Street Sheiks sounds like a forefather of rap with his cadences on 1929's "It's A Good Thing." Country blues singer-guitarist-sharecropper Garfield Akers is uncannily level and determined as he moves through a lyric on "Cottonfield Blues." The Tuff Green Orchestra swings to the rafters with 1949's "Let's Go To The Liquor Store." Zanily

named jazz saxman and vocalist Cleanhead Cootsie, something like Memphis's answer to Kansas City's Big Joe Turner, expounds on his weakness for women with "Big Legs." Many on the lower tiers have a special breath of life in their performances as well.

There are rough spots. 1950s balladeer Johnny Ace's several tracks get stuck in sentimentalism, and Disc 10 nearly collapses due to bunches of so-so numbers by the late-1930s bands of unknowns Charlie Burse and James DeBerry.

So, are 20 discs way too many for listeners not already under the spell of Memphis blues? Is the hefty price a turnoff? Try Rhino's single disc *Blues Masters, Volume 12: Memphis Blues*, then decide if you want to take the deep dive.

Ordering info: bear-family.com

Jeff Rogers: *Dream Job* (Diesel Entertainment Productions; 38:07 ★★★½) Recording in the Memphis-allied outpost of Musical Shoals, Alabama, Canadian pianist Jeff Rogers pins the appeal of his third album on his rather unusual soul-blues singing voice. There's a gentleness and strength in it, an emotional honesty and a measured assurance compressed in it as well. Intelligent self-composed songs on troubled/pleasurable romance further shine from the contributions of luminaries like keyboardist Clayton Ivey.

Ordering info: jeffrogers.ca

Emma Wilson: *Memphis Calling* (Emma Wilson Music; 36:22 ★★★) English blues singer Emma Wilson jumped at the opportunity to record last year at fabled Sam Phillips Recording studio in the port city. Aided by legendary sidemen Charles and Leroy Hodges, and others, she renders perfectly decent tunes — soul-revival originals, historical ones by Memphis music hall of famers Willie Mitchell, Steve Cropper and Eddie Floyd, and Chicago's Willie Dixon — with a solid good sense. **DB**

Ordering info: emmawilson.net

Raffi Garabedian
The Crazy Dog
INDEPENDENT RELEASE
★★★★

Raffi Garabedian, a rising force as tenor saxophonist and bandleader from the Bay Area, has created something deeply personal and musically inventive with *The Crazy Dog*. Drawn from the writings of his Armenian grandmother and father, the album opens with a solo saxophone ostinato in 5/4 on "The Armenian Question," but quickly thickens its plot, musically and conceptually.

Garabedian, whose resume has included innovative large ensemble work with his group Brass Magic and as part of the Bay Area-based Electric Squeezebox Orchestra, brings a savvy ear and sensibility to octet writing here. Garabedian's modest saxophone solo input impresses, but he opts to lend more spotlight to such bold players as clarinetist Ben Goldberg, trombonist Danny Lubin-Laden and vibist Dierk Peters. Meanwhile, vocalist Danielle Wertz's deceptively cool vocal approach illuminates the dramatic arc of the overall tale, in art song fashion, avoiding expressive ornamentation. Fittingly closing out the suite, "Contrapuntal Bewilderment" culls both personal emotional toll and the complex, contrapuntal ambitions of the musical project itself. *—Josef Woodard*

The Crazy Dog: The Armenian Question; A Mother's Letter; Escape To Erzurum; The Closet Playwright; Three Gold Liras; Ten Acres; First Trip To Fresno (1931); March 17, 1927; March 18, 2020; Contrapuntal Bewilderment. (37:44)
Personnel: Raffi Garabedian, tenor saxophone, voice (5); Danielle Wertz, voice; Jonathan Beshay, flute, tenor saxophone; Ben Goldberg, clarinet; Danny Lubin-Laden, trombone; Dierk Peters, vibraphone, glockenspiel; Rashaan Carter, bass; Sean Mullins, drums, percussion.
Ordering info: raffigarabedianmusic.com

Pat Bianchi
Three
21H
★★★★½

This back-to-basics organ date finds the former Pat Martino sideman dipping into a set of standards alongside powerhouse tenor player Troy Roberts and reliably swinging drummer Colin Stranahan. The results are incendiary. Bianchi's ninth outing as a leader emerges with scorching intensity on an uptempo "Love For Sale" that has Roberts digging deep on his bop-fueled tenor solo against Stranahan's insistent ride pulse and the leader's understated comping. Bianchi, one of the most fleet-fingered and soulful B-3 players on the scene today, adds a scintillating single-note solo of his own, his right hand flying over the keys while running unerring walking bass lines in the left.

Roberts' smoky tenor is strictly old school on "When Sunny Gets Blue," rendered as a relaxed, medium-tempo swinger underscored by Stranahan's *spang-a-lang* on the ride and those exacting, propulsive bass lines from the leader. Their take on Wayne Shorter's "Dance Cadaverous" is more adventurous than the rest of the straightahead fare here, which includes a rendition of Eddie Harris' funky "Cryin' Blues" that has Roberts employing a touch of harmonizer on his tenor in tribute to the electronic sax pioneer. They close with an adrenalized romp through the live "Cheek To Cheek": 12½ minutes of unadulterated burn. *—Bill Milkowski*

Three: Love For Sale; When Sunny Gets Blue; Dance Cadaverous; Cryin' Blues; Stardust; Cheek To Cheek. (49:04)
Personnel: Pat Bianchi, Hammond B-3 organ; Troy Roberts, saxophone; Colin Stranahan, drums.
Ordering info: patbianchi.com

New jazz label Artwork looks back on its acclaimed 2023 releases

KENNY BARRON *THE SOURCE*
Kenny Barron's first solo album in 30 years, nominated for the Grammy Awards 2024 as 'Best Jazz Instrumental Album'

SULLIVAN FORTNER *SOLO, GAME*
Hailed by his peers as one of the most brilliant pianists of his generation, Sullivan Fortner releases his stunning double album 'Solo Game'

MICAH THOMAS *REVEAL*
Discovered in Immanuel Wilkins' quartet, Micah Thomas is the revelation of his generation

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JIMMY KATZ

Jason Palmer takes an acute approach to flexibility in his practice.

Let's Augment Our Melodicism with Leaps and Bounds

One of the most common requests I get from my brass/creative students at New England Conservatory and Berklee College of Music is, "How do I develop my flexibility, the ability to jump around on the horn in a clear way?" This question is always centered around the students' facility and/or ability to use said facility in their style of soloing.

Throughout the history of this music there have been trumpet/brass players who have an acute approach to flexibility — executing wide, unconventional intervals in both directions — which has made their unique voice recognizable from the sheer content (note choices) alone. Any recording of artists like Woody Shaw, Ambrose Akinmusire, Joe Wilder or Peter Evans will inform you of this intriguing aspect to brass playing in a creative setting.

I always emphasize the importance of developing the ability to hear these wide leaps within an organized set first, then focus on utilizing this within a tune in a more musical way. Sometimes coupling large leaps with smaller ones in a consistent cycle is a helpful gateway for the player to get used to incorporating this movement into their natural melody-making. You can alternate playing minor sevenths with major thirds through the circle of fourths to hear the chromatic voice-leading from every other note (see Example 1 on page 53).

Interval Training

Another tangible exercise is to run through the circles of fourths and fifths, coupling each note with a note of any given interval. Make sure you're comfortable with all intervals within an octave first, paying special attention to those often neglected intervals like an augmented fifth and a perfect sixth (Example 2). When everything is smooth there, graduate to intervals greater than an octave. Slow practice is essential, paying attention to proper air support, nimble valve slotting for trumpeters and slide technique for trombonists, as well as focusing on tonguing and slurring.

You can also isolate each wide interval and spell out melodically any given chord quality that has been established in your musical imagination. Let's say that the interval you're dealing with is a 10th. In addition to playing the C and E, you can fill in the interval with Cmaj7, C7 tonality or a derivative of a dominant chord before or after playing the set interval to integrate the sound and feel of the leap into your natural way of melody making.

I always trade choruses or eights with a student on a tune they know with the premise that when they start a phrase, it has to start with the interval we're working on. After a round of this, we play a round where we have to end our phrases with said intervals, followed by a round where the leaps are mid-phrase.

Cascades

A third approach is what I call cascading chord qualities. I use two sets of progressions and always encourage my students to look to create more. The first set is maj7–dom7–min7–min7♭5 (Example 3a); the second set is maj7+5–maj7–dom7–min7 (Example 3b).

It's most effective to play each quality as many times up and down before going to the next chord quality until you have the ability to hear ahead of where you are playing. At that point it may be necessary to play each chord quality up and down one time each, or if you are feeling adventurous, you can cascade them or even quantize the order of the notes you play. Start these sequences from the top and bottom of the chord so you don't get used to only one way of expressing the concept.

Scrambles

An excellent workout for brass players is to employ triad scrambling/inversions. If you are playing ascending triads, for example, instead of playing F–A–C, you play F–C–A (ascending in that order). The inversions of this idea are A–F–C and C–A–F. Keeping these triads "dry" (no sevenths in the set) will ensure the challenge of hearing stacked intervals throughout your range. It's advisable for trumpeters to begin operating the two-octave range.

Once the scrambling is comfortable, challenge yourself further by cascading the chord qualities in this order, no matter the inversion: major–minor–diminished. In the key of F, a root-position scramble would have as follows: F–C–A, F–C–A♭, F–C♭–A♭, E–B–G#, etc. (Example 4). First inversion would include A–F–C, A♭–F–C, A♭–F–C♭, G#–E–B, etc. Second inversion would include C–A–F, C–A♭–F, C♭–A♭–F, B–G#–E, etc.

Anchor System

For brass players who are still developing out their range, it's helpful to work out a method I call the Anchor System. On the trumpet it involves picking a note in the mid-upper range, then cascading ideas (triads, scales, melodies, etc.) up to that note.

For instance, let's have an F at the top of the staff serve as our anchor and expand an E major triad up to the F. Cascading down would look like this (each grouping is ascending, but the first note of each four-note group is lower than the one before it):

- E–F
- B–E–F
- G#–B–E–F
- E–G#–B–E–F
- B–E–G#–B–E–F
- G#–B–E–G#–B–E–F

The challenge with these descending cascades is to have the connection of the anchor note to each subsequent lower note of each phrase be clear and in tune in the player's articulation.

The use of approach tones to the start of each set can also add a nice color to the flow of the progression (Example 5). You may also find it more beneficial to start out working these movements in the form of scales as opposed to chords (e.g., in F major the scale set would be F; E–F; D–E–F; C–D–E–F; B♭–C–D–E–F, etc.). Although this line is more horizontal than vertical, it gives the player more opportunity to focus on nailing large leaps the further down you go in the sequence.

Unconventional Zone

Flexibility doesn't have to mean exclusively using large intervals. Here's one last concept that isn't as rangy that can get you into an unconventional zone.

Take any octave and play all 12 major scales with that specific octave. The top and bottom notes never change, so the key that doesn't have that note will have an extra note. (Just think of it as a demented bebop scale.) Play them all in the circle of fourths and/or fifths up and down, in one breath once you have your speed up. Consider playing one up, another down to really get the juices flowing upstairs.

When you are satisfied with the scales, graduate to chords with the same harmonic movement. We'll call the octave notes the "anchor" notes and play all triads and seventh chords within that octave. Feel free to add a seventh degree to all of the keys that have the anchor note in the triad/chord already to give uniformity to all the shapes (Example 6). Play them from the bottom up and top down.

Once you are fluent in this, challenge yourself with this formula: anchor–root–third–fifth–anchor–fifth–third–root–anchor (Example 7). All chord/scale qualities are welcome in this practice. You will notice that some of these shapes produced are things that you've played 1,000 times already. Don't stay too long on those; focus instead on the shapes that really jump around within the octave. In some cases, you'll have a choice in the range at which you play a particular note. Use your intuition.

In playing all of these examples, I can't stress the importance of slow, deliberate practice enough. Find the tempo that's just fast enough that you don't fumble. **DB**

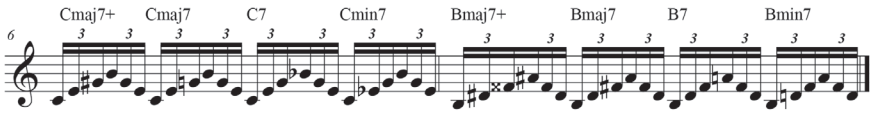
Jason Palmer is a trumpeter, composer and educator living in New Hampshire. He has recorded 17 albums as a leader and has worked with Mark Turner, Greg Osby, Allison Miller, Grace Kelly, Matana Roberts, the Jazz at Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Common, Ravi Coltrane, George Burton and Michael Janisch, among numerous others. Palmer is a professor of ensembles and brass at Berklee College of Music and New England Conservatory of Music, as well as a Ravenscroft Jazz Resident Artist at Arizona State University. He has recently been visiting the JazzCampus in Basel, Switzerland, for lectures, lessons and coachings. Palmer is currently recording with the Giant Step Arts organization and is a Conn-Selmer artist.

Example 1

Example 2

Example 3a

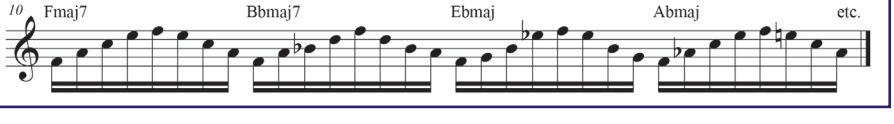
Example 3b



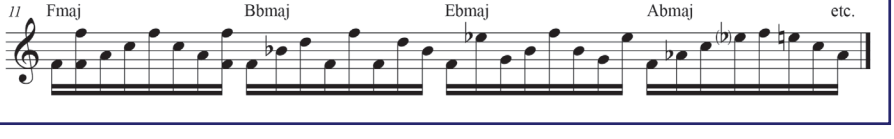
Example 4

Example 5

Example 6



Example 7



DUY TRAN

Jennifer Wharton: a combination of weak and strong, light and shade.

Jennifer Wharton's 17-Bar Bass Trombone Solo on 'Mama's Alright'

Bass trombone is one of those instruments that's typically thought of as a supportive one, an instrument with the role of playing written parts in a section, not an improviser or soloist. Jennifer Wharton shows otherwise. With her group Bonegasm, she not only plays sectional parts but solos and composes. Her song "Mama's Alright," from the 2023 album *Grit & Grace* (Sunnyside), includes a solo from her.

It's in B♭ minor, and there's a definite Latin feel, especially in the basic bass line, shown upfront. Adding to that Wharton plays a lot of 16th-note syncopations. Check out the licks where she only plays on the upbeat 16ths: measures 8, 10, 11 and 14. All those offbeats can really move your body.

But Wharton also adds upbeat syncopation in conjunction with strong beats, such as in bars 1, 6, 7, 12 and 15–17 (the main bass line is a combination of strong beats in the first half and syncopations in the second). Putting some accents on stronger beats alongside others on the weak beats not only helps create variety but is also another way of producing danceable rhythms. There are even places such as measure 3 where the accents are entirely on strong beats (the off-beat 16ths lead to the strong beats in this measure, which create less of a syncopated feel). So the hipness of Wharton's rhythms isn't necessarily due to syncopation, but to her combinations of syncopation with more strong-beat-oriented phrasing.

As long as we're speaking about phrasing, how about the parts of the bars Wharton starts and ends on? From the beginning, she jumps off from beat 2 and then lands on the "and" of 2 in the next bar. In the next bar she starts again on beat 2 (actually the 16th note leading to it) but this time concludes on the next downbeat. This is similar to what Wharton did with syncopation: She's varying between landing on downbeats and landing on other places in the bar.

And not in a predictable way, either. Her next phrase stars on the pickup to beat 3 but lands on beat 1 again, and the next one starts

on the pickup to 3 again but this time concludes on the "and" of 1. She continues to display this same variety of starting and ending points throughout her improvisation.

And her phrases lengths are also varied. That first phrase is two bars, but the next two are only about one bar, and the next is about two-and-a-half. Of course, Wharton is also obscuring where these phrase end and begin. I'm hearing the two low F's at the start of bar 6 as the end of a phrase. It could be argued that this phrase continues through until the A natural at the end of measure 8, or that the B♭ at the start of measure 7 is a phrase ending. To my ear, this is part of the technique, not only varying phrase length but also making it sometimes unclear where phrases begin and end (and sometimes making it absolutely clear). To make an analogy to language: Some statements end with punctuation like periods, exclamation marks and question marks, but others are separated by commas, colons, semicolons and such.

To continue, at measure 9 we have a bar-and-a-half phrase, and then a half-bar phrase, and then a couple more bar-and-a-halfs before the final two-and-a-half-measure phrase. So, not only does Wharton vary her phrase lengths but also saves the longest for the finale. Also interesting is how in the latter part of this solo Wharton uses space to make the phrase lengths clearer.

And how about the biggest phrasing issue: The solo is 17 bars long. In music, things generally occur in multiples of two. To have the solo be such an odd number of bars is unusual. Her phrasing variations obscure this, though. Listening through this improvisation, it doesn't sound like there's an odd measure. But there is.

Another unexpected and wonderful thing she does has to do with register. Most of this solo occurs in the two octaves between the opening low F and the E♭ above the staff, but in the penultimate phrase Wharton drops way down into the sub-staff range to the B♭ and A. This is almost as low as bass trombone can go.

Typically, low-range instruments avoid these areas when soloing, as it's difficult to be heard over the rest of the ensemble, but Wharton went there. Adding to that is the fact that she doesn't start there when she has only bass and drums to compete with; she hits the basement while the rest of the group is playing. But maybe that's why rather than compete with a group of trombones, or try to get above them, she dropped below them to be heard.

In conclusion, I'd like to bring us back to Wharton's first lick. It's sort of the same as the bass line, though whereas the bass line resolves up to the D♭ the first time and up to the C the second, Wharton resolves the D♭ to the C, kind of combining the resolutions. Also, she doesn't play the bass line. She starts on beat 2 instead of beat 1, and so the D♭ lands on beat 3 instead of beat 2, like an echo of the bass part.

The C, though, does land on the same beat as the bass part. This is also very effective, as she's resolving to the bass note on the same beat as the bass lands on it. But it's the second of the key, so it doesn't sound like a strong resolution. This combination of weak and strong, light and shade, is a quality of a powerful improviser. **DB**

Jimi Durso is a guitarist and bassist based in the New York area. He recently released an album of Indian classical music played on the string bass, titled *Border Of Hiranyaloka*. Find out more at jimidurso.bandcamp.com.

XO Brass 1634 Tenor Trombone

Lightweight, Balanced Design Fosters Flexibility, Appeals to Professional Players

When I heard that world-renowned trombonist John Fedchock was involved in the design of the XO1634 trombone, I knew immediately that this was going to be an excellent instrument. Yet, I am honestly surprised at just how good it is.

I admit that my long-standing opinion of trombones made by parent company Jupiter Band Instruments was largely formed the first time I tried their student horns in the '90s. I was underwhelmed, and honestly paid little attention to them or the XO Brass line of professional instruments that has emerged since. But after a week of play-testing the XO1634, they sure have my attention now.

The first thing you'll notice is the beautiful XO "designer series" case. It is silver with a brushed finish that at first glance looks like aluminum (the sticker on the bottom tells me it's polyethylene vinyl acetate, my second guess). The YKK zippers are sturdy and have what looks to be a water-resistant seal when closed. The black fabric inside covers a formed foam lining, and there are two small storage areas. Overall, it's an impressive package.

The bottle of Ultra-Pure slide treatment adds a nice touch, but the included XO 6.5AL mouthpiece has a flatter rim than most 6.5AL mouthpieces I've tried before. (I would venture to guess that players of this trombone likely aren't going to use this mouthpiece, anyway.) The handles feel nice and sturdy, and there are backpack straps that attach to the D-rings on the outside shell of the case, which makes transportation a breeze.

The XO1634 is has a .508-inch bore (like J.J. Johnson's famous trombone) and is available with an 8-inch detachable yellow or red brass bell (the model I tested had a red brass bell). Both bells are described as "ultra lightweight" with a thin bell wire; it definitely feels light in the hands, so that checks out. The nickel silver slide is also extremely lightweight and has a rounded nickel silver crook. It looks like a trumpet water key down there. (Are they shaving weight there, too?)

The main brace of the XO1634's bell has an interesting "S" curve to it, placing the bell mount farther forward than usual on the bell side. This curved brace combined with the light weight of the assembled instrument makes it very comfortable to hold and would likely lessen the wear-and-tear of long practice sessions or performances. Apparently the bell resonates better when attached at that particular spot. The bell produces a nice, long, sustained ring when the rim is struck with a fingernail, which is sufficient evidence to satisfy my curiosity.

Another spot for potential weight saving is the three-piece removable counterweight. Those trombonists among us who are familiar with the horn J.J. made famous will recognize this design and appreciate the beautiful 24K gold finish. The mounting point for the weight is intended to be the lower side of the main tuning slide. There is no lower ferrule on that cross brace, so the weight can be pushed all the way down to the bottom, touching the tuning slide tube.

I have always centered my counterweights, and it never occurred to me until now that moving them might affect the overall resonance of the instrument. Yet, it seems to do exactly that — although the change is very subtle. Your results may vary here, and there is always the option to remove the weight entirely should you be wanting an even lighter horn.

So, how does it play? I'll be bold and say that the XO11634 is everything a .508 trombone should be, and I have played them all. I can't help but flash back to my youth, trying to sound like J.J. using the same horn he played to such acclaim. Yep, there's that sound: big and clear and focused. Yet, something is different. The tone is familiar but even more centered and free blowing, with an instant bell response. The intonation of the overtone series is excellent. The slide is lighter and the horn is easier to hold. Even third position is where it's supposed to be (you know what I mean). Playing this horn made me want to start transcribing J.J. solos again.

The XO11634 is a fine trombone, in the same category as the best professional brass instruments available today. There isn't any groundbreaking innovation here other than an unusual counterweight placement. Instead, there are a lot of very well-conceived and elegantly executed tweaks to a familiar, time-tested design. The result is really exceptional and makes for a beautiful instrument that is a joy to play because it's *easy* to play.

A quote from Fedchock's promotional online video for the XO1634 neatly sums up precisely what XO Brass has achieved here: "an ease of playing through modern technology." —*Ryan Miller*

xobrass.com

1. Depth of Sound

Designed specifically for lead trumpet players, Bach Commercial series mouthpieces are made for those who are looking for greater depth of sound and volume when playing in higher registers. The Commercial series starts with a Classic cup, but uses a 27 throat and a 24 backbore and increases the outside mass. Commercial mouthpieces are entirely lead-free and are available in shallow and medium V-shaped cups.

More info: bachbrass.com

2. Protect & Preserve

Blessing Maintenance kits include everything you need to protect and preserve your trumpet, cornet or flugelhorn. The kits contain Blessing valve oil, Blessing tuning slide grease, a small mouthpiece brush, a valve casing brush, a flexible snake and a 12- by 12-inch black microfiber cloth. Also included are instructions on proper instrument maintenance.

More info: blessingbrass.com

3. Confluence of Talents

Courtois Antoine Courtois has relaunched its professional trumpets with the Confluence range, characterized by an elegance of sound representative of the French School. Designed to satisfy musicians looking for a richer sound with plenty of acoustic projection, they combine ease of play with flawless pitch while adapting to all repertoires. The company's Germany-based workshops have given birth to four new trumpets within the Confluence range: two pitched in B-flat and two in C. These trumpets are the result of the meeting of trumpet artist Clément Saunier, craftsman-designer Adrien Jaminet and the Antoine Courtois Research and Development teams.

More info: a-courtois.com/en

4. Dense Core

The Model CVP B-flat Trumpet (C Vintage Paris) from S.E. Shires embodies the pre-war classic trumpet that inspired it. Excelling in jazz, commercial and classical playing, it produces a wide variety of colors with a beautiful, dense core. A unique version of the broadest S.E. Shires trumpet bell taper in a slightly narrower diameter, combined with a U5 leadpipe and braced C tuning slide, make the instrument's harmonics feel particularly close and fluid. Other specs include a .459-inch bore and a 4.75-inch one-piece hand-hammered yellow brass bell.

More info: seshires.com

5. Cloudy & Smoky

Like the OIRAM trumpet, the OIRAM Fresu flugelhorn from Van Laar was designed by the Belgian architect Mario Garzaniti. It is constructed with a very large one-piece hand-hammered bell, a heavy valve unit and curved slides, which guarantee very light wind resistance. The sound in the middle register is cloudy and smoky, but it can be augmented to achieve great power in the top register. The instrument has a .413-inch bore and a 16.299-inch bell diameter.

More info: vanlaartrumpets.nl/en

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JAZZ CAMP GUIDE

SUMMER SWING!

90+ JAZZ CAMPS GEAR UP FOR COOL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES!

Berklee Summer Camper Talima Cirilli. (Photo by Kelly Davidson)

Looking toward the city side of learning, campers at the Summer Jazz Workshop of Fordham College at Lincoln Center performed in New York's Times Square.

YOU DO *YOU* AT SUMMER JAZZ CAMP

Summertime, and the living is … improvised! When the weather heats up and the days get longer, there's no shortage of options out there for places where that improvisation, and learning, can happen. Whether you're an upstart 10-year-old piano player looking for your first jazz camp experience or an 45-year-old plumber, doctor or teacher moonlighting as a trombonist, the jazz world is brimming with opportunities to improve your chops and have some fun away from home.

Maybe you want to see Sweden … Maine, that is, where Camp Encore/Coda takes place in rural New England. Staying on the East Coast, looking for something intimate? The Hudson Jazz Workshop in the Catskills takes just 10 students at a time and works hard to offer that personal touch, complete with a chef on staff. And over in Killington, Vermont, a locale best known for winter skiing, Jazz in the Mountains delivers a killer setting for adults to sharpen their jazz skills.

If you're thinking, "Rural is nice, but I'm a city kind of cat," maybe you head down South to the New Orleans Trad Jazz Camp to learn the original stuff in the birthplace of jazz. Or maybe it's off to New York, that mecca of the music, for immersive experiences like the Summer Jazz Workshop by Fordham College at Lincoln Center or Manhattan School of Music's MSM Summer.

Out West, students can really stretch the boundaries of the music at the Not Just Jazz Ensemble at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle or take advantage of one of a variety of camps offered by the Stanford Jazz Workshop.

And if you're looking to go very far in jazz — as in far away — maybe Joshua Breakstone's Jazz Guitar Dream Experience in Kyoto, Japan, is the place for you.

Prefer something with more of a Latin, as in Cubano, feel? KoSA's Cuba Workshop & Festival in Havana may be the exotic hang you desire.

We're just scratching the surface here, but the fact is that the world is your jazz oyster. On the following pages we present all this and more. We hope you find your perfect summer jazz experience and go for it! —*Frank Alkyer*

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Congratulations **to MSM alumnus** ***Ambrose Akinmusire*** **(BM '05), featured in this month's *DownBeat* cover story.**

Gary Smulyan leads a big band at Fordham Summer Jazz Workshop.

JOYCE BOGHOSIAN
Soloing at Mason Jazz Camp.

NEC
Concentration at Jazz Lab @ NEC.

Taking in NYC at Fordham Summer Jazz.

EAST

This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

Berklee Summer Programs
Boston, Los Angeles, California and Valencia, Spain

June through August

Study with world-renowned faculty of one of the preeminent institutes for contemporary music and performing arts. Find on-campus or online summer programs for your experience level in music performance, theater, dance, music production, songwriting and music business. More than 30 programs available for ages 12 and up.

Faculty: Visit summer.berklee.edu

Cost: Visit summer.berklee.edu

Contact: Visit summer.berklee.edu

or Instagram: @berkleesummer or call +1 617-747-2245

Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead
The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC

May 28–June 7

Under the direction of Jason Moran, Kennedy Center artistic director for jazz, Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead is an international two-week jazz residency performance and composition project discovering and presenting the next generation of jazz greats.

Faculty: Jason Moran and a host of artist-instructors

Cost: Free

Contact: Visit kennedy-center.org/education/opportunities-for-artists/pre-professional-artist-training/betty-carters-jazz-ahead

Camp Encore/Coda
Sweden, Maine

June 26-Aug. 11

Established in 1950, Camp Encore/Coda provides a robust music program mixed with traditional summer camp programming. Campers can access jazz, classical, rock/pop and theater. Its jazz program places campers in lessons, combos, big bands, improvisation, arranging, theory and history classes. Music faculty are graduate students and professionals who teach and perform at camp. The non-competitive environment makes this a great summer retreat to learn and play jazz. Campers also participate in non-musical activities, i.e. waterfront, sports, campfires, evening activities. Camper ages: finished 3rd–11th grade.

Faculty: See encorecoda.com.

Cost: All-inclusive tuition: first session, $6,500; second session, $5,700; full season, $10,250; two-week sessions for first time 3rd-6th graders: first session $4,250, second session $4,000.

Contact: Cara Bergantino, cara@encorecoda.com or call 617-584-1129.

Central Pennsylvania Friends of Jazz Camp
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

June 12-15

Featuring Terrell Stafford, the Friends of Jazz Camp emphasizes improvisation taught in small group settings. Students play with other students of similar ability. Students also spend time on jazz history, theory and composition. Daily jam sessions and a concert showcase give students a chance to show off what they've learned.

Faculty: Terrell Stafford, Tim Warfield, Steve Varner, Joe McDonough, Mark Hunsberger, Paul Bratcher, Gavin Horning, Jeff Stabley, Kirk Reese and Tim Thompson

Cost: Residential — $500; Commuter — $425 (subject to change)

Contact: Mark Hunsberger, camp director, mhunsberger@messiah.edu or call 717-540-1010; friendsofjazz.org/kids

Eastern U.S. Music Camp, Colgate University
Hamilton, New York

June 30-28

Challenging and fun, excellent preparation for college on all instruments and vocals, the Eastern U.S. Music Camp has a wide variety of choices. The camp organizes contemporary jazz-rock ensembles, jazz combos, a studio orchestra, vocal jazz choirs in all styles. There are weekly public concerts for small and large ensembles as well as training in theory, harmony, composition, improvisation and music production in addition to guest artists and master classes. Reservations are on a first-come, first-serve basis, auditions are not required. Camp takes place on Colgate University's campus. Enrollment is approximately 125 students up to age 18 with various backgrounds and abilities.

Faculty: Tom Christensen, plus professional educators, composers, conductors, solo artists to be announced

Cost: Visit EasternUSMusicCamp.com

Contact: summer@EasternUSMusicCamp.com or call 518-877-5121

EasternUSMusicCamp.com

Section Work at Jazz House Summer Workshop.
RICHARD CONDE

Mike DiRubbo, left, teaches at Litchfield Jazz Camp.
STEPHAN PAPANDREA

A beautiful setting at the Newport Summer Jazz Camp.

Alphonso Young Jr. performs at the National Jazz Workshop.
SUZETTE NIESS

Hudson Jazz Workshop
Hudson, New York
Aug. 1-4

Hudson Jazzworks grants six scholarships and is in collaboration with the Conservatorium van Amsterdam (CvA), the Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium (RMC Copenhagen), the New School, CUNY and William Paterson University. The program includes live participants who attend the workshops, a master class and performance. On Aug.4, the workshop hosts two events: the Special Guest Master Class and the HJW Concert at the Hudson Opera House. Be ready for a deeply personal, high level and enriching experience with Catskill mountain views and a chef.

Faculty: Armen Donelian and Marc Mommaas with special guest Ed Neumeister

Cost: $945, scholarships available

Contact: info@hudsonjazzworks.org
hudsonjazzworks.org

JAZZ HOUSE Summer Workshop
Montclair, New Jersey
Aug. 5-17

Instrumental and vocal students ages 12-18 receive top-notch instruction to develop key skills, including enhanced knowledge of fundamentals and jazz performance. Highlights include small group and big band ensembles, master classes with renowned special guests, improvisation, history and culture, composition and film scoring. A final performance is part of the Montclair Jazz Festival.

Faculty: Christian McBride (artistic director), Ted Chubb (workshop director), Billy Hart, Oscar Perez, Charlie Sigler, Roxy Coss, Andy McKee, Nathan Eklund, Bruce Williams, Mike Lee, Michele Rosewoman, Jason Marshall, Alvester Garnett, David Gibson, Jerome Jennings, Kelly Green, Dylan Pramuk

Past Guest Artists: Immanuel Wilkins, Brandee Younger, Billy Harper, Russell Malone, Regina Carter, Nicole Glover, Andrew Cyrille, Endea Owens, Christian Sands

Cost: Tuition: $1,850; Room & Board (optional): $1,550

Contact: Email info@jazzhousekids.org or call 973-744-2273
jazzhousekids.org

Jazz In The Mountains
Killington, Vermont
Aug. 11–16

Jazz In The Mountains creates a stimulating environment of music-making and interpersonal support for adult musicians. Situated in the mountains of Vermont, our professional staff

Performance · Arranging · Technology

July 14-19

Shenandoah Conservatory
Winchester, Virginia

National Jazz Workshop.ORG

Learning the bass at Milt Hinton Institute.

Rehearsal at MSM Summer.

brings challenge, growth, and encouragement to rehearsals, master classes, and performances, including guest artists Denis DiBlasio, Ray Vega, Joe Davidian, and others to guide 4 ensembles. Past guest artists include Jerry Bergonzi & Steve Davis.

Faculty: Denis DiBlasio, Ray Vega, Joe Davidian, Bill Reynolds, Charlie Sarling, Rich Davidian, Glendon Ingalls, Paul Asbell, Bear Irwin

Cost: Visit jazzinthemountains.com

Contact: Rich Davidian, camp administrator, jazzmountains@gmail.com or call 802-798-9998.

Jazz Lab @ NEC
Boston
June 30–July 6

Jazz Lab is a week-long creative music program. Musicians, age 13-19, work with world-class faculty and guest artists in ensembles, workshops, master classes and enjoy incredible performances. In 11 years, Jazz Lab has prepared hundreds of students to pursue studies in music at the best music schools in the nation.

Faculty: Henrique Eisenmann, artistic director, piano (on faculty at The Juilliard School); Tim Lienhard, executive director, trombone; Lihi Haruvi, saxophones/woodwinds (on faculty at Berklee College of Music & MIT); Zwelakhe Bell le Pere, bass (educator at Jazz at Lincoln Center); Ken Schaphorst (on faculty & co-chair of Jazz at New England Conservatory); Michael Thomas, saxophones/woodwinds (on faculty at Hartt School of Music), Peter Moffett, drums; Wendy Eisenberg, guitar (on faculty at New School of Music); David Zoffer, piano (chair of NEC Prep Jazz, on faculty at New England Conservatory & Berklee College of Music); Farayi Malek, voice, (on faculty at Berklee College of Music & New England Conservatory)

Cost: $1,340 — Tuition, $975; Room and Board (Double Occupancy), $175; Meal Plan (Day students only, optional). Need-based Financial Aid available.

Contact: summer@necmusic.edu
necmusic.edu/jazzlab

JazzWire Summer Summit
Rockville, Maryland
July 24–27

JazzWire Summer Summit is one of the few boutique jazz camps in the world dedicated to adult amateur and semi-pro musicians. The camp has helped more than 1,000 adults connect with their "inner musician" for 20 years. JazzWire is all about improvisation, small group jazz and connecting with others.

Faculty: Jeff Antoniuk, Sherrie Maricle, Amy Shook, Shawn Purcell, Jackie Warren, Greg Boyer, Chase Sanborn and more

Cost: Early Bird Tuition (before May 1, 2024) $1,175; Regular tuition (after May 2, 2024) $1,275 Reduced tuition: For military and families

Contact: Jeff Antoniuk, artistic director, 443-822-6483
JazzWireSummit.net

Litchfield Jazz Camp
Washington, Connecticut
June 30–July 26

Litchfield Jazz Camp has been a special place for musical and personal growth since 1997. Top-notch faculty teach groups at all levels in a supportive, collaborative atmosphere. There is no pre-audition. Upon arrival, students are placed in skill-based combos. Ages 13 through adult are welcome.

Faculty: Luques Curtis, Zwelakhe Bell le Pere, Sean Pentland, Avery Sharpe, Joris Teepe, Ian Carroll, Steve Johns, Matt Wilson, Don Braden, Claire Daly, Paul Bollenback, Mike Godette, Dan Liparini, Doug Munro, Dave Stryker, Jen Allen, Zaccai Curtis, Orrin Evans, Julian Shore, Carmen Staaf, Kris Allen, Caroline Davis, Mike Dirubbo, Andrew Hadro, Jeff Lederer, Albert Rivera, Dakota Austin, Joe Beaty,

Todd Coolman teaches a master class at Skidmore Jazz Institute.

Performance time at William Patterson Summer Jazz.

Peter McEachern, Dave Ballou, Jean Caze, Russ Johnson, Nicole Zuraitis, Richie Barshay

Cost: $1,795/week, residential (need-based financial aid available)

Contact: Email tegan@litchfieldjazzfest.com or call 860-361-6285.

Long Island Summer Jazz Workshop

Brookville New York

July 15-20

On the campus of Long Island University at the Post/Tilles Center, this one week, full-day, non-residential jazz camp is built for high school students (ages 13-18). Students learn with Grammy-nominated faculty and perform at the first annual Tilles Center Summer Jazz Festival on July 20.

Faculty: Matt Wilson, artistic director, Jeff Lederer, education director

Cost: $800

Contact: Jeff Lederer at jeffrey.lederer@liu.edu

liusummerjazz.com

Marshall University Jazz-MU-Tazz Summer Jazz Camp

Huntington, West Virginia

June 9-14

An immersive six-day, five-night experience geared toward musicians in high school freshmen through college. No prior jazz experience required. Jazz improvisation, combo playing, jazz theory, history and instrument-specific master classes highlight the daily schedule in a relaxed, welcoming and nurturing environment.

The Kennedy Center

Celebrating *Ellington 125*

Throughout the 2023–2024 season, the Kennedy Center commemorates Duke Ellington's 125th birthday with institution-wide celebrations across Jazz, Dance, and the National Symphony Orchestra.

Cyrus Chestnut: Duke Ellington Sacred Concert
APR. 29 AT 8 P.M. | CONCERT HALL

Jason Moran – Solo Ellington
APR. 10 AT 8 P.M. | EISENHOWER THEATER

Duke Ellington Orchestra Featuring Lisa Fischer
MAR. 15 AT 7 & 9 P.M. | TERRACE THEATER

See the full line-up at **Kennedy-Center.org**

Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead

Calling all emerging jazz artists! Under the direction of Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz Jason Moran and other esteemed artist-instructors, *Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead* is an international residency performance and composition project discovering and presenting the next generation of jazz greats, culminating in a live artist showcase at the Kennedy Center.

This two-week program—for which there is no tuition or application fee—is open worldwide to jazz artist-composers age 25 and under.

2025 Workshop Dates: May 27–June 6, 2025
2025 Applications Open: Fall 2024

Learn more at **tkc.co/JazzAhead**

Jazz
Jason Moran
Artistic Director

ELSA BORRERO

Vocalizing in Vermont at the Summer Jazz Workshop.

All smiles at the New York Jazz Academy.

Faculty: Jeff Wolfe, director and education coordinator; Martin Saunders, trumpet; Ed Bingham, saxophone; Mike Stroeher, trombone; Danny Cecil, bass; Nick Vassar, guitar; Jesse Nolan, drums

Cost: Early bird tuition, $350 (until May 1); $400 after May 1; Housing and meal plan options available

Contact: Jeff Wolfe, director of jazz studies, wolfe9@marshall.edu or call 304-696-3613

Millt Hinton Institute for Studio Bass at NJPAC
Montclair, New Jersey

July 14-20

The Milt Hinton Institute for Studio Bass at NJPAC, in residence at Montclair State University, welcomes young musicians to a summer of learning and discovery. Unique among music camps, the Hinton Institute is designed to support intermediate and advanced bass players ages 14-18 for a week of expert classes, performances, ensemble work, studio sessions, lectures, workshops and more. The camp will be housed on MSU campus where students will live, study and perform.

Faculty: Peter Dominguez, institute artistic director, bassist, professor of double bass and jazz studies at University of Wisconsin–Madison; Rufus Reid; Ben Williams; Luis Perdomo; Jeremy Smith; Sam Suggs; Martin Wind; Marcus McLaurine; Bill Moring; Mimi Jones; Emma Dayhuff; Diana Gannett; and Bill Crow

Cost: $1,250. Need-based tuition scholarships are available

Contact: Visit njpac.org/hinton or arteducation@njpac.org

Mason Jazz Camp
Fairfax, Virginia

June 24-28

The Mason Jazz Camp is an inclusive program for musicians (instrumental and vocal) of all levels. Students study improvisation, jazz theory, ear training, performance practice, composition, arranging and jazz history and participate in master classes and concerts with leading educators in Washington D.C., Virginia and Maryland. There are tracks for under-18 and adults.

Faculty Wade Beach, Graham Breedlove, Aaron Eckert, John Kocur, Kevin McDonald, Xavier Perez, Victor Provost, Darden Purcell, Shawn Purcell, Ben Thomas and a special guest artist

Cost: music.gmu.edu/visit-us/mason-jazz-camp

Contact: John Kocur at jkocur@gmu.edu

music.gmu.edu/visit-us/mason-jazz-camp

Rehearsing at Eastern U.S. Music Camp.

MSM Summer
New York, New York

July 8 – Aug. 1: Musical Theatre

July 15 – Aug. 1: Composition and Instrumental

Manhattan School of Music's summer program for young musicians ages 8-17, is designed to develop talent, build friendships and have fun! MSM Summer provides instruction and performance experience for students in a dynamic conservatory setting. Students develop their musical skills and join a vibrant community of young musicians.

Faculty: Most MSM Summer teaching artists are experienced performers; Many faculty are MSM alumni and all possess at least a master's degree

Cost: Musical Theatre (4 weeks) — $4,125; Composition, Instrumental & Jazz Voice (3 weeks) — $3,075

Sibling Discount: 10% off the second child's tuition

Contact: Ryan Kamm, assistant dean for youth programs and director of precollege, msmsummer@msmnyc.edu or call 917-493-4536

msmnyc.edu/programs/msm-summer

New York Hot Jazz Camp
New York, New York

April 22-28

An immersive experience with New York's finest traditional jazz musicians and recording artists, open to musicians ages 18 and older — of all skill levels — who want to further their knowledge of classic jazz. Scholarships Available.

Faculty: Catherine Russell, Rossano Sportiello, Dan Levinson, Ron Wilkins, Mike Davis, Tal Ronen, Cynthia Sayer, Kevin Dorn

Cost: $1,050

Contact: info@nyhotjazzcamp.com, admin@nyhotjazzcamp.com

nyhotjazzcamp.com

New York Jazz Academy Summer Jazz Intensives
New York, New York

July 1-Aug. 30 (choose from 1-9 weeks)

New York Jazz Academy Summer Jazz Intensives are NYC's most popular summer jazz programs, offering high-quality jazz education and a fully immersive NYC experience. Highlights include a diverse curriculum including lessons with top NYC teaching artists, theory classes, ensemble rehearsals, master classes and jazz club visits. This camp is for musicians 14 to adults; Instrumentalists and vocalists; beginning,

jazz lab @ NEC

New England Conservatory

June 30 – July 6, 2024
Boston, MA

A Summer Program for Creative Musicians

Scan the code or visit necmusic.edu/jazzlab to learn more and register

With faculty from New England Conservatory, The Juilliard School, Berklee College of Music, The New School, and more...

necmusic.edu/jazzlab instagram.com/jazzlabmusic

Breathing in that fresh Vermont air at Jazz in the Mountains.

Off to Sweden (Maine) at Camp Encore/Coda

intermediate and advanced levels.

Faculty: Javier Arau, David Engelhard, Jeff Dingler, Tom Dempsey, Peck Allmond, Daniel Bennett, Tammy Scheffer, Carolyn Leonhart, Jay Leonhart, Ron McClure

Cost: Starting at $1,116 per week.

Contact: nyja@nyjazzacademy.com, (718) 426-0633

nyjazzacademy.com

New York Jazz Workshop Summer Jazz Intensive Series

New York, New York

June 9–22 (in Tuscany, Italy)

July/August (3- and 4-day intensives in NYC)

Find out why the New York Jazz Workshop Summer Jazz program is regarded as a premium summer jazz program in NYC. Musicians from all over the globe have turned to the workshop's Summer Jazz Intensives to collaborate, learn and get inspired in the workshop's state-of-the-art music studios, which are fully equipped for a first-class experience.

Faculty: Marc Mommaas, Kenny Wessel, Michel Walker, Tony Moreno, Olivia Foschi, Jim Ridl, Jacob Sacks, Amina Figarova, Vito Goncalvez, Vanderlei Pereira, Jocelyn Medina, Sean Conly and more.

Cost: From $465 (for three-day intensives) to $625 (for four days). Ask for early bird discounts.

Contact: erin@newyorkjazzworkshop.com

The Newport Jazz Summer Camp

Newport, Rhode Island

July 28–Aug. 3

The Jazz Camp at Newport — located in Newport, Rhode Island, on the campus of Salve Regina University — is a great opportunity for high school students, ages 14-18, to learn from professional musicians and music professors. The week-long camp will conclude with a performance on the Foundation Stage at the Newport Jazz Festival at Fort Adams State Park, courtesy of Newport Festivals Foundation, Inc. Students attending Jazz Camp at Newport will also attend a master class and have the opportunity to have a meet and greet with a Newport Jazz Festival artist, presented in association with Newport Festivals Foundation, Inc. Financial aid is available, please visit our website for more information.

Faculty: Visit salve.edu/jazzcamp

Cost: $1,400 overnight, $800 commuter

Contact: azzcamp@salve.edu or call 401-341-2297

salve.edu/jazzcamp

Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz & Performing Arts Summer Jazz Camp

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

July 8-12, July 15-20

This in-person, two-week intensive program provides jazz education to music students with at least two years of experience on their primary instrument. The students will be placed in small and large ensembles where they gain experience in performance opportunities as well as participate in master classes with world-renowned jazz artists.

Faculty: Travien Bison, Sumi Tonooka, Bobby Zanzel, Richard Hill and Nazir Ebo

Cost: $450 for one week; $900 for two weeks

Contact: Travien Bison or Lovett Hines, lchines@clefclubofjazz.org or call (215) 893-9912

Jazzwire Summer Summit caters to adult learners.

RBH Jazz Camp
Burlington, Vermont

July 29-Aug. 4

This week-long jazz getaway, features world-renowned faculty. Daily ensemble workshops in jazz, samba and Latin jazz, instrumental master classes, rhythm section workshop for vocalists and nightly jam sessions. The week concludes with performances by all participants.The area offers nature paths, beautiful lakes and beaches, quaint eateries and shopping.

Faculty: Roni Ben-Hur, director, jazz ensembles, guitar; Sheila Jordan, vocals, and rhythm section for vocalists; Helio Alves, samba ensembles, piano; Harvie S, bass; Ralph Lalama, jazz ensembles reeds; Vince Cherico, Latin jazz ensembles and drums; Ray Gallon, piano

Cost: $1,990 per week, which is an all-inclusive fee for all workshops, a private room and three healthy meals daily (Dietary needs accommodated)

Contact: ronibenhur@gmail.com

Samba Meets Jazz Workshops – Maine
Bar Harbor, Maine

July 30 – Aug. 6

Located on the campus of College of the Atlantic on Frenchman's Bay (steps from Acadia National Park), the camp's instrumental, vocal and tap-dance programs are geared to adult hobbyists, educators and working musicians. It's a chance for participants of all musical backgrounds to study and hang with world-renowned faculty and like-minded peers. Our personalized instrumental program includes ensembles, improvisation, instrument-specific study, arranging and optional big band. Vocal studies include repertoire development, interpretation phrasing and scatting, as well as instruction in charting, theory, percussion accompaniment and Portuguese pronunciation (optional). Vocalists and tap dancers will be accompanied by instrumental faculty. Experience evening jams and public performances. Guests and chaperoned high school students are welcome. Partial scholarships and work/study available based on financial need and merit.

Faculty: Directed by Nilson Matta; faculty TBA

Cost: Visit sambameetsjazz.com (Discounts for educators and working musicians.)

Contact: Alice Schiller, alice@sambameetsjazz.com or call 917-620-8872

Skidmore Jazz Institute
Saratoga Springs, New York

June 29-July 13

The Institute, now in its 37th year, is led by Brian Carucci (director) and Todd Coolman (artistic director). The faculty are top jazz practitioners and gifted educators. Students work closely with faculty in daily combo rehearsals, improvisational and special classes.

31st Annual
SUMMER Jazz WORKSHOP
WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY

MARCUS MCLAURINE
Resident Faculty

July 21-27, 2024

Connect with our renowned resident faculty at the William Paterson University SUMMER JAZZ WORKSHOP, open to commuters of all ages and residents age 14-18. The workshop welcomes non-resident adult participants.

Resident Faculty
Kelly Green, Steve La Spina, Marcus McLaurine, Tim Newman

Selected Previous Artists
Dr. Billy Taylor, Clark Terry, Mulgrew Miller, Slide Hampton, Lou Donaldson, Curtis Fuller, Bob Mintzer, Paquito D'Rivera, Frank Wess, Chris Potter, and the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra

The Workshop provides:
- Seven intense days of instruction and mentorship in jazz improvisation, performance, arranging, and history
- Nightly clinics and concerts, meet-the-artist sessions
- Final concert with students and resident faculty

For information and online registration go to
wpunj.edu/summerjazzworkshop

A summer jazz family photo in Vermont at RBH Jazz Camp.

Private and semi-private lessons distinguish this institute from other similar summer camps. The Institute's concerts feature the Skidmore Faculty All-Stars and invited guest artists in performance, and afternoon master classes offer additional opportunities to learn from master musicians. Students have the opportunity to perform during the program and attend the Freihofer's Saratoga Jazz Festival.

Faculty: Todd Coolman, Bill Cunliffe, Steve Davis, Jimmy Greene, Sara Jacovino, Clay Jenkins, Brian Lynch, Dennis Mackrel, Mike Moreno, Dave Stryker, Steve Wilson, Brian Carucci

Cost: $3,209.10 (including room and board), scholarships available

Contact: Coleen Stephenson, cstephen@skidmore.edu or call (518) 580-5447

skidmore.edu/summerjazz

Summer Jazz Camp @ Moravian University

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

July 22-26

The camp offers jam sessions, jazz history, master classes, workshops, classes in recording techniques, plus a recording session. Two tracks are offered — beginner/intermediate and advanced (by audition). Student musicians entering grades 8-12 and college students are encouraged to enroll. High school juniors and older have the option to earn college credit. The camp's outstanding educators and professional musicians will perform for the campers and work with them in informative and engaging clinics and workshops.

Faculty: Members of the Moravian University jazz faculty

Cost: $475-$550

Contact: music@moravian.edu or call 610-861-1650

SummerJazz.moravian.edu

Summer Jazz Workshop Fordham College at Lincoln Center

New York, New York

July 1–27

The Summer Jazz Workshop is designed to support high school jazz musicians aspiring to reach the next level. The intensive program — offered in four, weeklong sessions — provides a unique jazz immersion experience in the heart of New York City. Students register online and participate in ensembles, studio classes and master classes with renowned faculty and guest artists.

Faculty: Ted Nash, Melissa Aldana, Mimi Jones, Adam Birnbaum, David Wong, Douglas Marriner, Lauren Sevian, Brandon Lee, Wilerm Delisfort, Jon Irabagon, Christopher McBride, Gary Smulyan, Matt Buttermann, Willie Applewhite, Mike Lee, Allison Miller and more

Cost: Tuition, $1,250 per week; Room & board, $650 per week; Scholarships available; Multi-week discounts, sibling discounts available

Contact: Matt Buttermann, info@jazzartsny.org or call 914-241-5559

jazzartsny.org

Tritone Jazz at Naz

Rochester, New York

June 16-21

Tritone is all about playing and learning and keeping it all fun. Curriculum is focused on adult learners (no one under 21 admitted) of all experience levels and includes participation in small combos, big bands, guided improvisation/theory classes, instrument instruction and jam sessions. Personal attention, with 5:1 camper/faculty ratio.

Faculty: Darmon Meader and Amy London (voice), Charles Pillow (sax/reeds), Rich Thompson (drums), Clay Jenkins (trumpet), Bob Sneider (guitar), Mark Kellogg (trombone), Dariusz Terefenko (piano), Marco Panascia (bass), Kristen Shiner-McGuire (rhythm & percussion)

Cost: Tuition alone, $995; Full package, including room & board, $1,715

Contact Information: Bob DeRosa, tritonebob@gmail.com

tritonejazz.com

Vermont Jazz Center, Summer Jazz Workshop — Instrumental Track

Putney, Vermont

Aug. 4-10

This multi-generational workshop gives participants (ages 16 and up) ample time to sing and play their instruments. Along with master classes, theory, listening hours and special topics, there are faculty coached ensembles and jam sessions every evening. Held in a charming, rural location with high quality pianos and gear. World-class faculty.

Faculty Haneef Nelson, Stacy Dillard, Michael Zsoldos, Helen Sung, Harvey Diamond, Ray Gallon, Freddy Bryant, Cameron Brown, Malik McClaurine, Brian Shankar Adler others...

Cost: $1745

Contact: Eugene Uman, eugene@vtjazz.org, 802-254-9088

vtjazz.org

Vermont Jazz Center, Summer Jazz Workshop — Vocal Track

Putney, Vermont

Aug. 4-10

This multi-generational workshop gives participants (ages 16 and up) ample time to sing and study with NEA Jazz Master Sheila Jordan. Includes master classes, theory, listening hours and special topics as well as singer-focused jam sessions every evening. Held in a charming, rural location in combination with an instrumental program.

Faculty: Vocalists Sheila Jordan, Amy London. Pro rhythm section: Cameron Brown, Helen Sung, David Picchi, Ray Gallon, Claire Arenius

Cost: See vtjazz.org

Contact : Eugene Uman, eugene@vtjazz.org or call 802-254-9088

vtjazz.org

William Paterson University Summer Jazz Workshop

Wayne, New Jersey

July 21-27

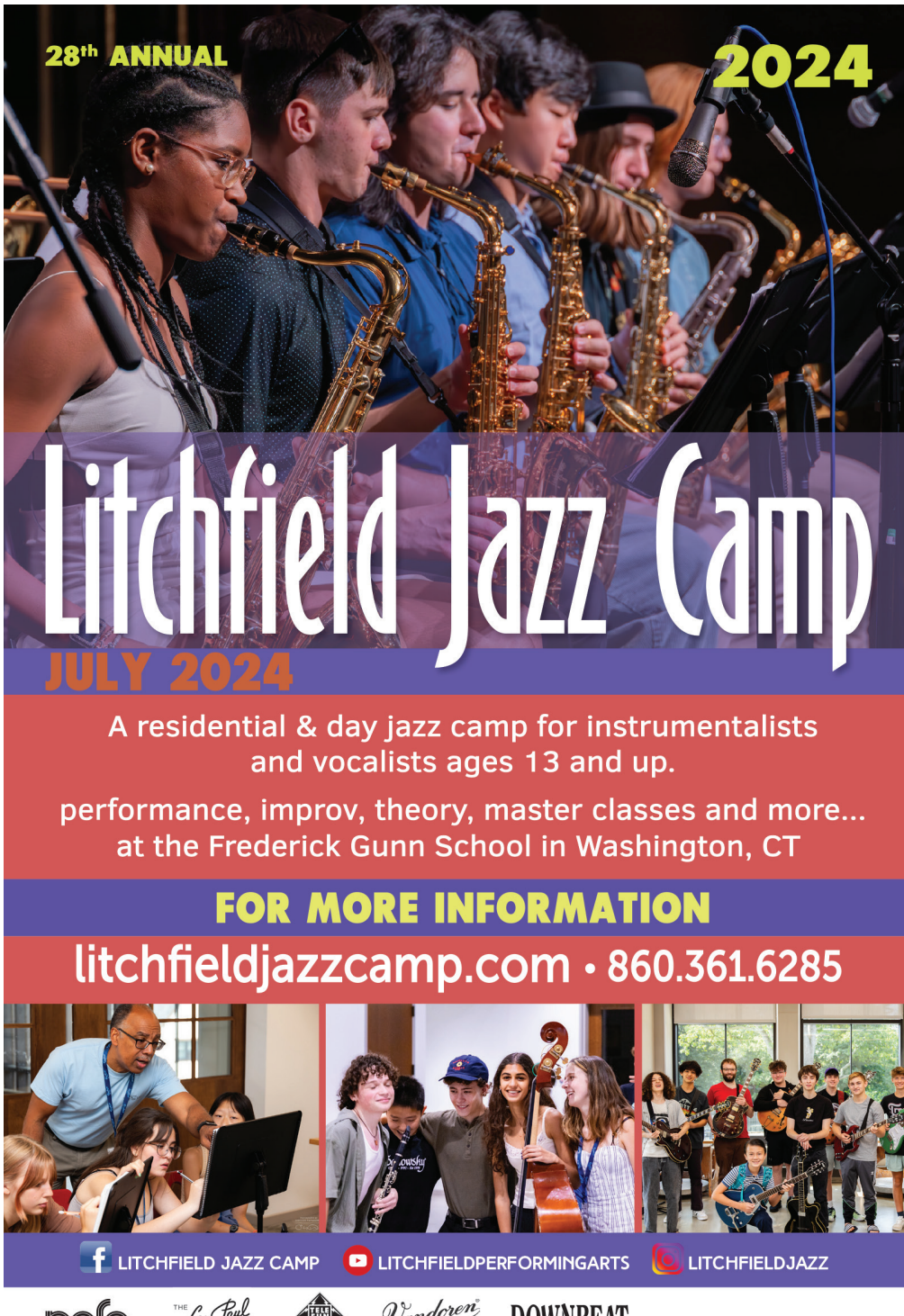
Commuters and residents 14 and older experience seven intense days of small group performance and improvisation, along with classes in arranging, improvisation and jazz history. World-renowned jazz artists provide extensive mentorship, and there are daily clinics and concerts.

Faculty: Tim Newman (director), Steve LaSpina, Marcus McLaurine, Kelly Green, Jon DiFiore, Wycliffe Gordon (artist in residence)

Cost: Commuters, $1,418 tuition (includes all concert admissions and music fees); Residents, $1,749 (includes all the above plus room and meals)

Contact: Cassandra Carlton, for general information, carltonc@wpunj.edu or call 973-720-3804; Dr. Timothy Newman, for scholarship information, newmant@wpunj.edu or call 973-720-3199

wpunj.edu/summerjazzworkshop



DREW RICE

Swingin' at the Texas Jazz & Blues Camp.

GONZALO MEJIA

The art of arco at Frost Summer Intensive.

SOUTH

This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

ColaJazz Summer Jazz Camp

Columbia, South Carolina

June 17-20

Dive into jazz at this dynamic southeastern summer camp! Unleash your musical potential with world-class instructors, big bands, combos, improv, master classes and performances. Perfect for aspiring artists, it's a blend of applied lessons and fun, shaping the jazz virtuosos of tomorrow.

Faculty: Visit colajazz.com/sc-summer-jazz-camp

Cost: $350

Contact: Mark Rapp, contact@colajazz.com, facebook.com/colajazzcamp

colajazz.com/sc-summer-jazz-camp

Creative Strings Workshop

Asheville, North Carolina

June 30-July 5, Session A

July 7-July 12, Session B

July 18-Aug. 21, Online

The Creative Strings Workshop Asheville Retreat, led by Christian Howes, offers an immersive educational experience for string musicians. Focusing on improvisation, eclectic styles and contemporary techniques, it combines master classes, performances and personal growth, set against Asheville's vibrant arts scene, fostering a nurturing community for musical and personal development. Online and in-person options are available.

Faculty: Christian Howes, Austin Scelzo, Jason Anick

Cost: $325-$995

Contact: Christian Howes, chris@christianhowes.com or call 614-332-8689

christianhowes.com/creative-strings-asheville-extension

Fernando Jones' 3rd Annual Blues Camp

Indianola, Mississippi

Spring/Summer, Dates TBA

Blues Kids Foundation presents Fernando Jones' 2024 Blues Camp Tour. It's free for local, national and international Blues Kids ages 12-18. After they pass their online or in-person audition, they will be put into a band. They practice the art of playing and performing the blues by ear. The camp is geared for all skill levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced. All instruments and vocalists are welcome.

Faculty: Highly trained/qualified and internationally traveled male and female instructors

Cost: Free (tuition waiver scholarships). Audition required

Contact: Visit BluesKids.com/EarlyBird

Fernando Jones' 4th Annual Blues Camp North Carolina

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

July, Dates TBD

Blues Kids Foundation presents Fernando Jones' 2024 Blues Camp Tour. It's free for local, national and international Blues Kids ages 12-18. After they pass their online or in-person audition, they will be put into a band. They practice the art of playing and performing the blues by ear. The camp is geared for all skill levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced. All instruments and vocalists are welcome.

Faculty: Highly trained/qualified and internationally traveled male and female instructors

Cost: Free (tuition waiver scholarships). Audition required

Contact: Visit BluesKids.com/EarlyBird

Fernando Jones' Innaugural Blues Camp Texas

Dallas, Texas

August, Dates TBD

Blues Kids Foundation presents Fernando Jones' 2024 Blues Camp Tour. It's free for local, national and international Blues Kids ages 12-18. After they pass their online or in-person audition, they will be put into a band. They practice the art of playing and performing the blues by ear. The camp is geared for all skill levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced. All instruments and vocalists are welcome.

Faculty: Highly trained/qualified and internationally traveled male and female instructors

Cost: Free (tuition waiver scholarships). Audition required

Contact: Visit BluesKids.com/EarlyBird

Fernando Jones' 4th Annual Blues Camp Florida

Palm Beach County, Florida

December 27-30

Blues Kids Foundation presents Fernando Jones' 2024 Blues Camp Tour. It's free for local, national, and international Blues Kids ages 12 to 18. After they pass their online or in-person audition they will be put into a band. We practice the art of playing and performing the Blues by ear. Ages: 12- to 18-year-old boys and girls. Levels: Beginner, intermediate and advanced. All instruments and vocalists are welcome.

Faculty: Highly trained/qualified and internationally traveled male and female instructors.

Cost: Free (tuition waiver scholarships). Audition required.

Contact: For more info visit: BluesKids.com/EarlyBird

Frost Summer Vocal and Jazz Instrumental Intensive

Miami, Florida

July 14-20

The Frost Summer Vocal and Jazz Instrumental Intensive is a one-week program designed for high school students to gain experience playing jazz while working with Frost School of Music faculty. In addition to performing ensembles, courses in theory and improvisation,

arranging, recording techniques, entrepreneurship and college prep workshops are included in the curriculum. The camp is geared for students in grades 9-12.

Faculty: Dr. Chuck Bergeron, Dr. Kate Reid and other Frost faculty

Cost: Contact Dr. Chuck Bergeron, c.bergeron@miami.edu

Contact: Dr. Chuck Bergeron, c.bergeron@miami.edu

frost.miami.edu/programs/summer-programs/index.html

Furman University and Greenville Jazz Collective Summer Jazz Camp

Greenville, South Carolina

June 23-27

Students take classes in jazz theory, improvisation and history, and perform in a big band and/or jazz combo. The camp includes evening faculty recitals and a final student concert and is open to high school and middle school students of all levels and instruments.

Faculty: Matt Olson, Brad Jepson, Tim Blackwell, Ian Bracchitta, Keith Davis, Shannon Hoover, Adam Knight, Kevin Korschgen, Tim Leahey, Chris Mitchell, Justin Watt, Tom Wright

Cost: $445 for commuters; $575 for overnight campers; Need-based scholarships available

Contact: Dr. Matt Olson, director of jazz studies, Matt.Olson@furman.edu or call 864-294-3284

furman.edu/academics/music/camps-conferences/summer-jazz-camp

JazzArts Summer Music Camp Presented at UNC Charlotte

Charlotte, North Carolina

June 24-28

The JazzArts Summer Music Camp is an exciting one-week comprehensive music training program for students, grades 7-12, devoted to America's original art form. Students will be immersed in an intensive jazz curriculum and have the opportunity to interact and play with other young musicians from across the Charlotte region.

Faculty: Lovell Braford, Carl Ratliff, Troy Conn, Patrick Brown and other guest instructors (Recent special guest clinicians have included Wycliffe Gordon and Roxy Coss)

Cost: $325

Contact: Patrick Brown, education director, pbrown@thejazzarts.org

thejazzarts.org/education/jazzarts-summer-music-camp

Jazz Institute at Brevard Music Center

Brevard, North Carolina

June 4-15

The Jazz Institute at Brevard is a 10-day overnight summer jazz program nestled in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains and provides expert instruction and mentorship to students at all levels from ages 14-29. Alumni include Luther Allison, Liany Mateo and Ben Turner. Scholarships and assistantships are available.

Faculty: Michael Dease, Rodney Whitaker, Sharel Cassity, Benny Bennack III, guest artist David Sanborn and more

Cost: $1,950 (includes all instruction, housing, and meals); Scholarship assistance is available

Contact: admissions@brevardmusic.org or call 828-862-2140

brevardjazz.org

Loyola University Summer Jazz Camp

New Orleans, Louisiana

June 9-12

Four days of intensive jazz improvisation experience in a small-group setting taught by Loyola University New Orleans jazz faculty. Musicians will learn improvisation and ensemble performance in a small-group setting. We accept students with one year of experience and up. You must be 14 years old to stay in the dorms.

Faculty Wess Anderson, Jason MIngledorff, John Mahoney, Wayne Maureau, Amina Scott, Ed Wise, Dr. Nick Volz, Meryl Zimmerman, Dr. Gordon Towell and Matt Lemmler

Cost: Tuition $300; Room & Board $700

Contact: Dr. Gordon Towell, gltowell@loyno.edu

Lynn Seaton Jazz Double Bass Workshop at UNT

Denton, Texas

June 11-15

The Lynn Seaton Jazz Double Bass Workshop offers an intensive week of study and performance opportunities for the upright jazz bassist. This intimate workshop is limited to 11 upright bass players. Classes include bass line development and daily sessions on technique. Participants will have an opportunity to perform with a rhythm section and be coached. Outstanding faculty concerts will be presented throughout the week. The Lynn Seaton Jazz Double Bass Workshop is open to advanced high school (14 and older), college, professional and serious amateur upright bassists wishing to expand their capabilities. Saturday night finishes with a Bass Bash concert where all participants perform in ensembles. Friends and family are invited.

Faculty: Lynn Seaton

Cost: Tuition $675; Lodging, under 18, $200-$245; Lodging, Adults, $250-$310; Meals, $150

9TH ANNUAL

TEXAS jazz&blues CAMP

Changing Lives Through Music

The **Texas Jazz & Blues Camp** in Austin, TX is a program of NSM, Austin, and is led by **Don Braden, a world-class tenor saxophonist, jazz educator, former sideman with Herbie Hancock, Wynton Marsalis, Freddie Hubbard, & Tony Williams, & director of Harvard Jazz Combos.** Featured instructors & clinicians include **Andre Hayward, Joe Morales, Peggy Stern, Red Young, Murali Coryell, Ernie Durawa, Ponder East, Tom Brechtlein, Chris Alcaraz, Chris McQueen, Sarah Sharp, Jay Leach, Jay Tillman,** & others.

at New School of Music, Austin

hosted by St. Stephen's Episcopal School

6500 St. Stephen's Dr, Austin, Texas 78746

Day Camp: $895 • June 10-14 • 9am–4pm • 11–Adult

Residential Camp: $1295 • June 9-14 • 13–Adult

(5PM DORM CHECK-IN ON SUNDAY, JUNE 9TH)

TexasJazzAndBluesCamp.com

or call 512-535-0208

Enroll@NewSchoolOfMusic.net

SPONSORED BY

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Cultural Arts CITY OF AUSTIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HENNA CHEVROLET

Contact: music.camps@unt.edu or call 940-369-6541

jazz.unt.edu/doublebassworkshop

National Jazz Workshop

Winchester, Virginia

July 14-19

A five-day camp offering curriculum tracks focused on performance, arranging and technology. Participants perform in small groups and big bands, attend workshops and master classes with visiting artists, with afternoon and evening concerts and nightly jam sessions for different levels.

Faculty: Mike Tomaro, Sherrie Maricle, Ashland Parker, Matt Niess, Eric Byrd, Craig Fraedrich, Darryl Brenzel, Bill Dunn, Joseph Henson, Robert Larson, Shawn Purcell, Donovan Stokes and more than 20 guest artists

Cost: Commuters, $400; Overnight residents, $750

Contact: nationaljazzworkshop.org

New Orleans Trad Jazz Camp

New Orleans, Louisiana

June 16-22, June 23-29

NOTJC is a weeklong adult workshop in the heart of the French Quarter. Sessions include sectionals, ensembles, nightly jam sessions, lectures, a second line parade, playing at Preservation Hall, a final performance and a continuous jam session on Saturday for those wishing to stay and extra day.

Faculty: Banu Gibson, Dan Levinson, Tom Fisher, Ray Moore, Hal Smith, Gerald French, Danny Rubio, Charlie Halloran, David Sager, David Boeddinghaus, Steve Pistorius, Kris Tokarski, Mark Brooks, Katie Cavera, Molly Reeves, Charlie Fardella, Doyle Cooper, Meryl Zimmerman

Cost: Tuition, $2,450 (Includes six nights of housing, breakfast and lunch); Scholarships available for those under 23

Contact: Banu Gibson, notradjazzcamp@gmail.com or call 504-895-0037

tradjazzcamp.com

9th Annual Texas Jazz & Blues Camp

Austin, Texas

June 9-14

Texas Jazz & Blues Camp is an all-embracing program focused on musical and personal growth where students can learn by playing with the greats and each other. While a commitment to the music is at the highest level, the program is not competitive. No pre-audition required.

Faculty: Don Braden, Andre Hayward, Joe Morales, Peggy Stern, Jay Tillman, Chris Alcaraz, Dr. Jeremy George, Ponder East, Sarah Sharp, Jay Leach, Paul Garretson, Dave Lee, Dr. Kaz Kazanoff, Red Young, Ernie Durawa, Murali Coryell, Tom Brechtlein, Chris McQueen, Daniel Dufour, Rique Pantoja, Dr. Mike

Sailors, Dr. Utah Hamrick, Mark Epstein

Cost: Commuter, $895 (On-campus lunch is provided); Residential, $1,295 (On-campus breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided)

Contact: Roni Chavez, enroll@newschoolofmusic.net, 512-535-0208

TexasJazzAndBluesCamp.com

University of Central Oklahoma Jazz Lab 14th Annual Summer Jazz Camp

Edmond, Oklahoma

June 23-28

Join the award-winning UCO jazz faculty for a jam-packed week designed to get you playing jazz. Participate daily in combos, master classes, improv and theory sessions, jazz history presentations, big band reading sessions and evening jam sessions in a fun and relaxed environment. Open to instrumentalists age 14 and up. Tuition includes a camp T-shirt, two meals and daily snacks. Convenient on-campus housing available with rates starting around $35 per night.

Faculty: Brian Gorrell, Lee Rucker, Jeff Kidwell, Clint Rohr, Michael Geib, Grant Goldstein, Garrett "Big G" Jacobson, Bill Repavich, Ryan Sharp, Zac Lee and special guests

Cost: Tuition, $350 with $50 early bird discount available; On-Campus housing available with rates starting around $35 per night, double occupancy

Contact: Brian Gorrell, bgorrell@uco.edu or call (405) 974-5285

Ucojazzlab.com

UNT Jazz Combo Workshop

Denton, Texas

July 14-18

The acclaimed University of North Texas Jazz Combo Workshop is open to musicians ages 14 and up. The curriculum includes combo, faculty concerts, jazz theory/improvisation, jazz history/listening, and instrumental master classes (saxophone, trumpet, trombone, guitar, piano, bass, drums, vibes, violin).

Faculty: José Aponte, Alan Baylock, Annie Booth, Rodney Booth, Quincy Davis, Dave Meder, Davy Mooney, Philip Dizack, Lynn Seaton, Kimberly Hannon Teal

Cost: Tuition, $675; Housing, $200-320; Meals, $150

Contact: 940-369-6541 or Alan Baylock, alan.baylock@unt.edu jazz.unt.edu/combo-workshop

UNT Vocal Jazz Educator Seminar

Denton, Texas

June 20-22

This seminar is full of content relevant to current or aspiring vocal jazz educators of all levels (minimum age 18) with topics to include working with rhythm sections, repertoire, sound equipment, rehearsal techniques, warm-ups and exercises. Continuing Education Units available. Also available in conjunction with the UNT Vocal Jazz Summer Workshop for a combined experience of a full week of vocal jazz immersion.

Faculty: Jennifer Barnes, UNT director of vocal jazz, and more

Cost: Tuition, $350; Housing and meals, $100-170

Contact: music.camps@unt.edu; Jennifer Barnes, Jennifer.Barnes@unt.edu

jazz.unt.edu/vocaljazzedseminar

UNT Vocal Jazz Summer Workshop

Denton, Texas

June 23-27

For five days, participants are involved in every aspect of vocal jazz, from solo performing skills and voice pedagogy to songwriting and jazz theory, as well as the opportunity to join together and sing in an ensemble. Open for ages 13 and up and educators are welcome.

Faculty: Jennifer Barnes, UNT director of vocal jazz; Rosana Eckert, UNT principal lecturer of jazz voice; Alison Wedding, vocalist/songwriter

Cost: Tuition, $650; Housing and meals, $280-360

Contact: music.camps@unt.edu; Jennifer Barnes, Jennifer.Barnes@unt.edu

jazz.unt.edu/vocaljazzworkshop

NEW ORLEANS TRAD JAZZ CAMP

SESSION 1: JUNE 16 – 22, 2024

SESSION 2: JUNE 23 - 29, 2024

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

for those under 23!

Learn to play classic jazz from Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver!

Scholarship includes tuition, food, and housing in the French Quarter!!

The week includes sectionals, ensembles, a second line parade, playing at **Preservation Hall**, and a final concert.

NEW ORLEANS TRADITIONAL JAZZ CAMP

website: tradjazzcamp.com

email: notradjazzcamp@gmail.com

phone: 504-895-0037

Join the award-winning UCO Jazz faculty for a jam-packed week designed to get YOU playing jazz! Participate daily in combos, master classes, improv and theory sessions, jazz history presentations, big band reading sessions and jam sessions in a fun and relaxed environment. Open to instrumentalists age 14+.

June 23-28, 2024 $400 Tuition ($450 after May 1)

Optional on-campus housing available for an additional fee.

Register at ocae.uco.edu

For registration info, contact 405.974.3754 or ocae@uco.edu

For more information about UCO Jazz Studies, contact Brian Gorrell at bgorrell@uco.edu.

UCO UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA School of Music COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS AND DESIGN

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA JAZZ LAB

MIKE ANDERSON
Performance time at UW-Madison's Summer Music Clinic.

Swingin' at Birch Creek Music Performance Center.

MIDWEST

This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

Art of the Jazz Band
Evanston, Illinois
June 10-14, June 24-28

The Art of the Jazz Band Camps at Music Institute of Chicago offer students in grades 6-10 the opportunity to improve their skills through work with some of Chicago's finest jazz performers and educators. Audrey Morrison leads interactive classes and members of the MIC jazz faculty offer sectionals, coaching and master classes. Group listening to jazz recordings and class discussion are included. Participants will learn how to read jazz arrangements and to play by ear. The week culminates with an open rehearsal on the final day of camp.

The Art of the Jazz Band offers students the opportunity to learn about jazz, playing by ear and improvisation on a group platform. The format provides abundant one-on-one interaction between teachers and students. Participants will play fun and interesting music of many styles. The daily schedule will include group rehearsals, master classes and sectionals. Participants will learn to play by ear and how to read jazz arrangements.

Faculty: Audrey Morrison, Juli Wood, Darren Scorza, James Davis, Steve Ramsdell

Cost: TBD, a phone interview required prior to registration

Contact: Audrey Morrison, amorrison@musicinst.org

musicinst.org

Birch Creek Music Performance Center
Egg Harbor, Wisconsin
July 14-27, July 28-Aug. 10

Birch Creek is a summer residential music academy and performance venue for dedicated young musicians grades 7-12. Students master jazz fundamentals and improvisation by performing in big bands and small combos. They establish professional rehearsal and performance attitudes through close mentorship and observation by top jazz performers and educators.

Faculty: Jeff Campbell (program director), Rick Haydon, Reggie Thomas, Dennis Mackrel, David Bixler, Tanya Darby, Lennie Foy, Steve Horne, Clay Jenkins, Joey Tartell, Scott Burns, Todd Williams, Adaron Jackson, Michael Stryker, Doug Stone, Larry Brown

Cost: $2,400; Scholarships available

Contact: Michelle Naese, Registrar@BirchCreek.org or call 920-868-3763

BirchCreek.org/Academy

Fernando Jones' 15th Annual International Blues Camp
Chicago, Illinois
July 7-12

Blues Kids Foundation presents Fernando Jones' 2024 Blues Camp Tour. It's free for local, national and international Blues Kids. After they pass an online or in-person audition, they will be put into a band. Faculty practices the art of playing and performing the blues by ear. The camp is open to students from 12-18 at all levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced. All instruments and vocalists are welcome.

Faculty: Highly trained/qualified and internationally traveled instructors

Cost: Free (tuition waiver scholarships); Audition required

Contact: Visit BluesKids.com/EarlyBird

Fernando Jones' Inaugural Blues Camp
Kansas City, Missouri
June 20-22

Blues Kids Foundation presents Fernando Jones' 2024 Blues Camp Tour. It's free for local, national and international Blues Kids. After they pass an online or in-person audition, they will be put into a band. Faculty practices the art of playing and performing the blues by ear. The camp is open to students from 12-18 at all levels — beginner, intermediate and advanced. All instruments and vocalists are welcome.

Faculty: Highly trained/qualified and internationally traveled instructors

Cost: Free (tuition waiver scholarships); Audition required

Contact: Visit BluesKids.com/EarlyBird

Fernando Jones' Inaugural Blues Camp
University Park, Illinois
August, Dates TBD

Blues Kids Foundation presents Fernando Jones' 2024 Blues Camp Tour. It's free for local, national and international Blues Kids. After they pass an online or in-person audition, they will be put into a band. Faculty practices the art of playing and performing the blues by ear. The camp is open to students from 12-18 at all levels — beginner, intermediate and advanced. All instruments and vocalists are welcome.

Faculty: Highly trained/qualified and internationally traveled instructors

Cost: Free (tuition waiver scholarships); Audition required

Contact: Visit BluesKids.com/EarlyBird

Illinois Summer Youth Music
Urbana, Illinois
July 14-20

Senior Jazz (grades 8-12) focuses on improvisation in a combo setting. Junior Jazz (grades 6-8) offers a big-band experience with improvisation classes and opportunities for combo playing.

Faculty: Chip McNeill, Larry Gray, Joel Spencer, Joan Hickey

Cost: Residential, $800; Commuter, $500

Contact: isym.music.illinois.edu

Interlochen Arts Camp
Interlochen, Michigan
June 23-Aug. 4

Spend your days immersed in the world of jazz, and meet friends who love music as much as you do. You'll take master classes, study jazz improvisation, theory, history, creative concepts and improve your musicianship. Apply today for the Jazz Performance & Improvisation summer program, options available for 6-12 graders, or the Jazz Piano Intensive for high school students.

Blues Kids Foundation Presents Fernando Jones' 15th Annual Blues Camp International Tour

BLUESCAMPCHICAGO

FREE FOR BEGINNER, INTERMEDIATE & ADVANCED LEVEL SINGERS + INSTRUMENTALISTS AGES 12 TO 18

Audition today for all Blues Camps here @ BluesKids.com/EarlyBird · (779) BluesMe · Info@BluesKids.com

COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO · SUNDAY, JULY 7 - FRIDAY, JULY 12, 2024

Here are other Blues Camp sites below. Get additional info and updates at BluesKids.com.

THE B.B. KING MUSEUM & DELTA INTERPRETIVE CENTER, Indianola, MS · **KAPPA KAMP,** Dallas, TX
THE AMERICAN JAZZ MUSEUM, Kansas City, MO · **KOP MENTORING NETWORK,** Palm Beach County, FL
WINSTON-SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY, Winston-Salem, NC · **GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY,** University Park, IL

Enter your Blues Kid into the "12th Annual Blues of the Year Contest" BluesKids.com/Contest

Rolling Stone

"The non-profit Blues Kids Foundation holds annual Fernando Jones Blues summer camps, where students as young as eight or nine years old hone their chops."

This experience is presented in-part by: Mary Barnes Donnelley Family Foundation · Allstate · Columbia College Chicago · LeFort-Martin Fund · Tom Liebman · Facebook/Network for Good D'Addario Foundation · Chicago Public Schools · Knotty Luxe Arts Foundation · Jim Dunlop · Chicago Federation of Musicians (Local 10-208) · PERT Foundation · Rotary Club of Chicago · Dr. Grace Dawson Chicago (IL) Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated · Dr. Grace G. Dawson · Navy Pier · Chicago Community Trust · DCASE · Blueniversity of Chicago · Bobbie's Screen Printing

Combo action at the Ottawa University Jazz Camp.

Faculty: Sarah Gooch, drum set; Jacob Kelberman, jazz guitar and small ensemble; Stafford Hunter, member of the Captain Black Big Band; George W. Russell Jr., Berklee College of Music

Cost: $1,830-$10,080, financial aid and scholarships available

Contact: Office of Admission, admission@interlochen.org or call 800.681.5912

interlochen.org/camp

Jazz UP! Summer Jazz Combo Intensive
Carpentersville, Illinois
June 18-22

The Jazz Up! Summer Combo Intensive is a five-day program focusing on small group playing and improvisation with some of the finest musicians on the Chicago and New York scenes. Students learn from world-renowned guest artists, faculty performances, private lessons, studio recording classes, career discussions, masterclasses and rehearsals. Classes and rehearsals are held between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily, with jam sessions following.

Faculty: Sharel Cassity, Clark Sommers, Richard Johnson, Kyle Swan, Scott Hesse; past guest artists have included Quincy Phillips, Justin Robinson, Reggie Thomas and Pharez Whitted

Cost: $300

Contact: Sharel Cassity, jazzupinstitute@gmail.com or call 646-387-6862

jazzupinstitute.com

MPulse
Ann Arbor, Michigan
July 7-13

The MPulse Jazz Institute is an all-encompassing program for high school jazz musicians. Participants engage in approximately 35 sessions during this one-week program including classes in jazz repertoire, improvisation, arranging and jazz history. Classes are led by University of Michigan jazz faculty, SMTD applied faculty and professional jazz artists.

Faculty: Dennis Wilson

Cost: $1,830

Contact: Garrett Birk, MPulse Program Manager, mpulse@umich.edu

NIU Jazz Camp
DeKalb, Illinois
July 7-12

This camp will help you improve your performance and understanding of jazz with emphasis on performing, learning and listening. Camp activities include big band and jazz combo rehearsals, culminating in performances at the end of the week; jazz improvisation and theory classes; instrumental master classes and private lessons; jam sessions and nightly performances with faculty and counselors.

Faculty: Geof Bradfield, saxophone and camp director; Pharez Whitted, trumpet; Marlene Rosenberg, bass; Bobby Broom, guitar

Cost: $800 early bird registration by June 1. $850 after

Contact: Kristin Sherman, ksherman2@niu.edu or call 815-753-1450

Artscamps.niu.edu

Ottawa University Jazz Camp
Ottawa, Kansas (Kansas City)
June 23-27

Join Jazz Camp directors Dan Thomas and Bobby Watson and distinguished jazz educators for the Ottawa University Jazz Camp–Kansas City. The Ottawa University Jazz Camp is intended for aspiring musicians ages 12 to 112. Throughout the week, the world-class camp faculty provides in-depth study into jazz theory and improvisation, instrument-specific master classes, guided listening sessions covering the history of the music and many aspects of small group jazz performance. The camp will conclude with a public performance by student ensembles.

Faculty: Dan Thomas, Bobby Watson

Cost: Early bird tuition, $395 (Includes all classes, housing, three unlimited meals per day and parking); Early bird tuition, commuters, $325 (Commuters can purchase the meal package for $15 per day); Tuition after April 19, $450; $375 for commuters

Contact: Nick Rowland, director of music outreach, nicholas.rowland@ottawa.edu

ottawa.edu/music

The Songbook Academy
Carmel, Indiana
July 13-20

The Songbook Academy is a transformative summer music intensive that immerses high school singers in America's musical heritage and fosters artistic identity through song. Through access to top-tier mentors and a focus on America's musical foundations, the camp provides a safe space for young singers to become storytellers.

Faculty: Students receive personalized training from music directors who have worked with artists like Frank Sinatra and Liza Minnelli and vocal coaches from music schools like NYU Tisch School of the Arts and the University of Michigan; Past mentors include Catherine Russell, Janis Siegel, Ali Stroker, Andréa Burns, Liz Callaway and Scott Bradlee

Cost: Program fee, $1,000; Application fee, $50 (applications due by March 24)

Contact: Renée La Schiazza, director of programs, songbookacademy@thesongbook.org or call 317-844-2251

thesongbook.org/songbookacademy

SXU-Southside Summer Jazz Camp
Chicago, Illinois
July 22-26

The SXU-Southside Summer Jazz Camp welcomes students grades 6-12 of all instruments. The SXU-Southside Summer Jazz Camp is an opportunity to learn from, and work with, an outstanding group of SXU jazz educators dedicated to helping students gain confidence, improve musical abilities, and nurture a love for jazz. Students of all experience levels are encouraged to attend. For students new to jazz or looking to expand their horizons, there is something for everyone.

Faculty: Dr. Shawn Salmon, director, rhythm section; Andy Garcia, saxophone, ensemble director; Tim Bales, trumpet; Stephen Berry, trombone

Cost: $120

Contact: salmon@sxu.edu

sxu.edu (keyword: jazz camp)

Summer Music Clinic at UW-Madison
Madison, Wisconsin
Junior Session: June 16-22

Senior Session: June 23-29

Young musicians, music lovers and all interested in all forms of music and creativity can enjoy

SCAN ME

Study with World-Class Educators and Practitioners

Ottawa University

Prepare for a Life of Significance℠

JAZZ CAMP
KANSAS CITY

JOIN JAZZ CAMP DIRECTORS
DAN THOMAS AND BOBBY WATSON

JUNE 23-27, 2024

- IMPROVISATION
- SMALL GROUP
- THEORY & EAR TRAINING
- COMPOSITION & ARRANGING
- MUSIC BUSINESS

ENROLL BY APRIL 19 FOR
$395
EARLY BIRD TUITION

INCLUDES: HOUSING, PARKING and 3 MEALS PER DAY
COMMUTERS WELCOME AT A DISCOUNTED RATE OF $325

PARTICIPANTS WILL STUDY WITH JAZZ CAMP CO-DIRECTORS
DAN THOMAS AND BOBBY WATSON
AS WELL AS OU'S WORLD-CLASS FACULTY AND SPECIAL GUESTS. THE OU JAZZ CAMP IS OPEN TO ASPIRING JAZZ INSTRUMENTALISTS, AGES 12 AND UP.

Questions? Contact: Nick Rowland, Director of Music Outreach - Nicholas.Rowland@ottawa.edu

ottawa.edu/music

a week of music and memory making on the UW–Madison campus. With sessions for both middle and high school students, Summer Music Clinic offers the opportunity to learn from experienced educators from around the country, meet and collaborate with people of similar interests, create and share and grow your own unique creative and musical voice with others.

The program is designed to enhance and learn new skills, provide new experiences and create a community. Residential campers rise for breakfast at 7 a.m. and spend the day in student-chosen, music-class experiences until 4:30 p.m. Evenings include indoor and outdoor social activities as well as inspiring performances by guest artists, faculty members and fellow students. The week culminates with performances and presentations for family and friends to celebrate and share students' hard work.

Faculty: Expert artist/educators from around the area and country

Cost: Junior Session — Residential, $1,020; Commuter: $770; Senior Session — Residential, $1,170; Commuter, $820; International: $1,310

Contact: Carrie Backman, smc@wisc.edu or call 608-263-2242.

Tri-C JazzFest Summer Jazz Camp
Gill and Tommy LiPuma Center for Creative Arts, Cuyahoga Community College Metropolitan Campus
Cleveland, Ohio

June 10-21

Participants in this intensive two-week JazzFest Academy Summer Camp have opportunities to play in big bands, small groups and jam sessions; attend all performances of Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland; and interact with Tri-C JazzFest artists. The camp culminates in a series of student performances during JazzFest weekend on the Next Generation Stage.

Faculty: Dominick Farinacci, director; Anthony Taddeo; Nathan Paul Davis; Bryan Thomas; Dave Sterner and special guests from the JazzFest 2024 lineup

Cost: 400.

Contact: Michael Shirtz, Michael.Shirtz@tri-c.edu or call 216-987-4193

tri-c.edu/jazzfest/tri-c-jazzfest-summer-camp

Tritone Cool on the Lake
Baileys Harbor, Wisconsin

July 7-12

Tritone is all about playing, learning and keeping it all fun. Curriculum is focused on adult learners (no one under 21) of all experience levels and includes participation in small combos, big bands, guided improvisation/theory classes, instrument instruction and jam sessions.

Faculty: Terell Stafford (trumpet), Janet Planet (voice), John Harmon (piano), Tim Fitzgerald (guitar), Ryan Korb (drums), Mark Urness (bass); Rod Blumenau (piano), Dean Sorenson (trombone), Tom Washatka (saxophone and reeds)

Cost: Tuition, $995; Tuition and meals, $1,395 (On-site lodging is sold out for 2024. Plenty of nearby motels and B&Bs)

Contact: Bob DeRosa, tritonebob@gmail.com

tritonejazz.com

Western Michigan University New York Voices Vocal Jazz Camp
Kalamazoo, Michigan

July 29-Aug. 4

Camp is open to high school/college students, professional musicians, directors and anyone interested in learning more about vocal jazz, no audition required. Campers craft their own curriculum of electives, enjoy solo coaching and sing in an ensemble directed by one of the New York Voices. Scholarships are available.

Faculty: New York Voices (Kim Nazarian, Lauren Kinhan, Darmon Meader, Peter Eldridge), Greg Jasperse

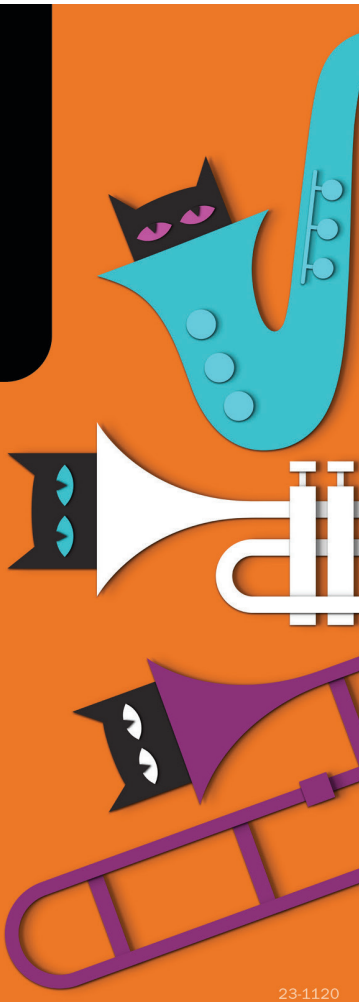
Cost: Tuition, $800

Contact: Greg Jasperse, Gregory.jasperse@wmich.edu or call 269-387-4689

newyorkvoices.com/the-wmu-nyu-vocal-jazz-camp-2022

Tri-C JazzFest Academy
Summer Camp
June 10-22

Gill and Tommy LiPuma Center for the Creative Arts
Tri-C Metropolitan Campus
Cleveland, OH
$400



This two-week camp helps students ages 8-18 sharpen their jazz performance and improvisational skills. Led by jazz trumpeter Dominick Farinacci and faculty who are working jazz musicians and respected educators, the students are engaged in big band and small group settings and treated to master classes with artists from the 2024 Tri-C JazzFest lineup. Students also perform at the festival and receive complimentary tickets.

Email **jazzfestacademy@tri-c.edu** or call 216-987-4193 to register.

Cuyahoga Community College

TRI-C JAZZ FEST CLEVELAND

23-1120

Win a trip to Fernando Jones' 15th Annual International Blues Camp at Columbia College Chicago

When? Sunday, July 7th thru Saturday, July 12th.

Who's eligible? Blues Kids who've never attended Blues Camp.

How do I audition? Online under parental/guardian supervision.

When can I audition? Now thru June 20th by 12P Central Standard Time. Contest entries will also serve as auditions for Blues Camp.

How can I find out more? Visit BluesKids.com/Contest for the details.

The Blues Kid of the Year Contest is also brought to you by these Blues Angels:
Mary Barnes Donnelley Family Foundation, Tom Liebman, LeFort-Martin Fund, Allstate, Columbia College Chicago and Knotty Luxe Arts Foundation.

RYAN TOY

Rockin' out at Stanford Jazz Workshop.

WEST

This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

Brubeck Jazz Summit
Incline Village, Nevada

July 7-13

Brubeck Jazz Summit is a program for outstanding pre-college musicians. Students learn from world-class faculty through rehearsals, master classes, career development, jam sessions and performances. Hosted by Classical Tahoe. Motivated students, 15-18 at the time of application, are eligible to apply.

Faculty: Roxy Coss and Lucas Pino, co-artistic directors; Guest artists include Chris and Dan Brubeck

Cost: $2,000 (includes tuition, housing, and on-campus meals); Scholarships available

Contact: Erin Lensing, jazz@classicaltahoe.org or call 775-298-0245

classicaltahoe.org/brubeck-jazz-summit

Centrum's Jazz Port Townsend Workshop
Port Townsend, Washington

July 22-28

Located on the Puget Sound, Centrum is open to instrumentalists and vocalists who are high school age and older. Attendees receive daily coaching in a small group setting from a world-class faculty. Master classes, theory, plus performances by faculty and guests included.

Faculty: John Clayton, Ben Wendel, Kweku Sumbry, Alison Miller, Tanya Darby, Wycliffe Gordon, George Cables, Gerald Clayton, Jeff Hamilton, Katie Thiroux, Terell Stafford, Dawn Clement, Gary Smulyan, Jiggs Whigham, Matt Brewer, Micheal Glynn, Matt Wilson, Taylor Eigsti, Eric Verlinde, J.D. Walter, Chuck Easton, Bruce Forman, John Hansen, Jon Hamar, Jay Thomas, Randy Halberstadt, Gary Hobbs, Kelby MacNayr, Chris Symer

Cost: Tuition, $895; Room & board, $725. Scholarships available

Contact: Gwen Franz, program manager, gfranz@centrum.org

centrum.org/program/jazz

Idyllwild Arts Jazz in the Pines Clinic
Idyllwild, California

June 30-July 13

Learn from professionals, rehearse and perform daily, specialized coaching, learn music theory, arranging and improvisational techniquess. Guest artists and faculty perform with students at the end of each week. For students ages 14-17. Audition required.

Faculty: John Daversa, Marshall Hawkins, Paul Carman, Tom Hynes, Dan St. Marseille

Cost: $3,730, includes tuition, room & board

Contact: summer@idyllwildarts.org or call 951-468-7265

idyllwildarts.org/summer

UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC
SUMMER JAZZ COLONY 2024
JULY 22–26

A one-week, intensive educational jazz program for a limited number of exceptionally gifted musicians, grades 9–12.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
JUNE 1, 2024

Pacific.edu/JazzColony

Jam Camp West
Loma Mar, California
July 13-19

A seven-day, overnight music, dance and vocal program for 9-16 year olds of all skill levels, held in the redwoods of Northern California. Beginner to advanced studies in ensembles, improv, vocals, dance, percussion, steel drum, spoken word, ukulele, songwriting and more.

Faculty: Josiah Woodson, Daria Johnson, Samara Atkins, Terrence Brewer, Javier Navarrette and more

Cost: $1,590

Contact: info@livingjazz.org or call 510-858-5313

livingjazz.org/jam-camp-west

JAS Academy
Aspen, Colorado
June 10-24 Big Band Session
July 29-Aug. 11 Afro-Caribbean Big Band Session

JAS Academy is a full-scholarship program for gifted jazz students in collaboration with University of Miami, Frost School of Music under artistic direction of Grammy-winning bassist, Christian McBride. The goal is to assist talented artists in career development and the business of music including marketing, recording and digital rights.

Faculty: Christian McBride, Chuck Bergeron, Shelly Berg, Etienne Charles, Mark Johnson, Michael Dudley

Cost: The Academy is full scholarship, with all travel, lodging, tuition and meals provided

Contact: jazzaspen@jasaspensnowmass.org or call 970-920-4996

Jazzaspensnowmass.org

Jazz Camp West
La Honda, California
June 8-14

A seven-day, overnight music, dance and vocal program for teens to seniors in the redwoods of Northern California. An all-star faculty teaches beginners to professionals with 120-plus classes as well as daily student and faculty performances. Big band, ensembles, combos, various styles of dance and vocals, songwriting, theory and more.

Faculty: Linda May Han Oh, Alicia Olatuja, Allison Miller, John Santos, Fabian Almazan, Jenny Schneiman, Mimi Fox and more

Cost: $1,625-$2,270, depending on accommodation; Scholarships available

Contact: info@livingjazz.org or call 510-858-5313

livingjazz.org/jazz-camp-west

Jazzschool Summer Youth Program
Berkeley, California
July

The Jazzschool Summer Youth Program is open to students on entering grades 7-10. Students participate in daily ensembles, theory classes, private lessons and workshops at the California Jazz Conservatory. Concludes with a student showcase.

Faculty: Visit jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Cost: jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Contact: Visit jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Jazzschool Jazz Piano Intensive
Berkeley, California
July

This five-day Intensive is for the intermediate pianist, focusing on rhythmic feel, comping and soloing in both trio and solo formats. Emphasis ion swing feel, chord voicings and voice-leading as well as analysis and performance of select jazz pianists' solo transcriptions. Concludes with a student performance.

Faculty: Visit jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Cost: Visit jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Contact: jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Jazzschool Advanced High School Jazz Intensive
Berkeley, California
August

This intensive is open to eight advanced high

school jazz instrumentalists, with openings for rhythm section instruments and horns. Musicians work closely with top Bay Area jazz artists, including rehearsals, master classes and private lessons at the California Jazz Conservatory. Students develop improvisation, arranging and composition skills in an intensive rehearsal format.

Faculty: Michael Zilber and others

Cost: Visit jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Contact: Visit jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Jazzschool Guitar Intensive
Berkeley, California

August

This intensive for aspiring professional guitarists is directed by jazz guitarist and educator Mimi Fox and features numerous guest artists on faculty. Concludes with a student/faculty joint performance, open to the public.

Faculty: Mimi Fox with numerous guest artists

Cost: Visit jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Contact: Visit jazzschool.cjc.edu/jazzschool-youth-programs

Lafayette Summer Music Workshop
Lafayette, California

July 15-19

In its 26th year, the workshop provides an inspiring environment for playing. Average student-to-teacher ratio is 6-to-1. Students welcome from 11 to adult.

Faculty: Bob Athayde, director; Kyle Athayde, director of curriculum; plus more than 50 artist educators including Remy LeBouef, Camille Thurman, John Daversa, Natalie Cressman, Mads Tolling, Sullivan Fortner, John Santos

Cost: $750 (Scholarships available)

Contact: Bob Athayde, workshop director, bathayde@comcast.net or call 925-914-0797

lafsmw.org

LYNX National Arts & Media Camps– Music Industry
Denver, Colorado

June 16-28

This program offers high school students a window into the music industry. The camp serves as a preview of the CU Denver Music & Entertainment Industry Studies (MEIS) Department programs. Students explore the industry including performance, songwriting, music business and recording arts.

Faculty: Leslie Soich (CU Denver voice faculty), Lorne Bregitzer (CU Denver recording arts faculty), Dan Hodges (CU Denver music business faculty) and Katie Yeager (CU Denver singer/songwriter alumnus)

Cost: $1,200-$2,500

Contact: Laura Harvey, lynxcamp@ucdenver.edu or call 303-315-7468

artsandmedia.ucdenver.edu/prospective-students/lynx-camps

Mt. Hood Jazz Camp
Gresham, Oregon

June 24-28

This five-day jazz camp focuses on improvisation. Students in grades 9-12 are invited to study with stop educators and musicians from the Northwest. Students are placed into combos based on level of experience.

Faculty: Dan Davey (director of jazz studies), Susie Jones, Tim Gilson, Ryan Meagher, Kyle Smith, Tim Rap, Chris Shuttleworth, Quinn Walker, Clay Giberson

Cost: $270 per student

Contact: Dan Davey, Daniel.Davey@mhcc.edu or call 503-491-7010

mhcc.edu/JazzCamp

Monterey Jazz Festival Summer Jazz Camp
Pebble Beach, California

June 24-28

Middle and high school instrumentalists and vocalists of all skill levels are invited. Students

IDYLLWILD ARTS

JAZZ IN THE PINES STUDENT CLINIC

JUNE 30 - JULY 13, 2024 | AGES 14-17

Explore your creativity in this summer jazz camp, where you'll work closely with GRAMMY award-winning artists and other master musicians, including Marshall Hawkins, John Daversa, and program director Tom Hynes.

The Idyllwild Arts Summer Program experience includes:

- Music Theory
- Arranging
- Improvisational Techniques
- Masterclasses
- Rehearsal in big bands and combos
- Specialized Instrument Coaching
- Weekly Concert Performances with Guest Artists & Faculty

Learn more and register for this and other summer music programs at **idyllwildarts.org/summer**

study and perform with acclaimed faculty as well as Monterey Jazz's new artistic director, Darin Atwater. This is a day camp, no housing is available.

Faculty: Visit montereyjazzfestival.org/education/program/summer-jazz-camp

Cost: $365 per student

Contact: claire@montereyjazzfestival.org or call 831-373-8842

montereyjazzfestival.org/education/program/summer-jazz-camp

Not Just Jazz Ensemble at Cornish College of the Arts

Seattle, Washington

July 9-Aug. 2

Designed for students passionate about all genres of music, students are led by Cornish undergraduate faculty. This eight-session course explores jazz styles and development in improvisation, arranging and ensemble performance. Students refine technique and musicianship and write original music.

Faculty Visit summer.cornish.edu

Cost: $730, Early bird deadline, March 1

Contact: Michael Callaizakis, program manager, plus@cornish.edu or call 206-726-5148

summer.cornish.edu

Pacific Summer Jazz Colony

University of the Pacific, Stockton, California

July 22-26

This is a one-week, intensive program in jazz performance for a limited number of talented students. Study with Pacific's Jazz Studies faculty and guest artists. Join combo rehearsals, master classes, classes in jazz theory and advanced jazz improvisation.

Faculty Patrick Langham and Joe Mazzaferro

Cost: $1,700; partial scholarships may be available

Contact: Patrick Langham, program director, jazz studies, plangham@pacific.edu

pacific.edu/music/community/pacific-summer-jazz-colony

Stanford Jazz Workshop

Stanford, California

Giant Steps for middle school musicians, July 8-12 & July 14-19

Jazz Camp for ages 12-17, July 14-19 or July 21-26

Jazz Institute for Adults, July 28-Aug. 2

Jazz Camp Online, ages 12-plus & July 8-12

The workshop offers premier jazz immersion opportunities for musicians with plenty of options for middle schoolers, high schoolers and the Jazz Institute for advanced young players and adults. Campers learn from the greatest jazz musicians in the world, focusing on improv skills and combo performance.

Faculty: Approximately 80 faculty mem bers, which recently included George Cables, Charles McPherson, Nasheet Waits, Wycliffe Gordon, Taylor Eigsti, Anat Cohen and more

Cost: $895-$2,645 per week, depending on program and housing choices

Contact: info@stanfordjazz.org or call 650-736-0324

Stanfordjazz.org

UNC Jazz Camp

Greeley, Colorado

July 7-12

Spend six days on the UNC campus in beautiful Colorado learning and performing with new friends, the UNC jazz faculty and special guests. All ability levels are welcome.

Faculty: Steve Kovalcheck, Marion Powers, Jim White, Shawn Williams, Drew Zaremba, Dana Landry, Andrew Janak, Brian Casey, Don Aliquo, Paul McKee

Cost: Visit arts.unco.edu/music/jazz-camp

Contact: mark.allwein@unco.edu

arts.unco.edu/music/jazz-camp

Spend a week with world-class artists and faculty at Stanford University!

- For all vocalists and instrumentalists
- Meet and play with jazz students from around the world
- Study with leading jazz artists
- Small ensemble performance
- Learn to improvise
- Improve your technique
- Ear training and music theory classes
- Stay on beautiful Stanford University campus
- Finanical aid available, apply by April 15, 2024

JUL 8-12
GIANT STEPS DAY CAMP
MIDDLE SCHOOL MUSICIANS

JUL 14-19 & 21-26
JAZZ CAMP
HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL MUSICIANS AGES 17 AND UNDER

JUL 8-12
JAZZ CAMP ONLINE
AGES 12 & UP

JUL 28-AUG 2
JAZZ INSTITUTE
FOR ADULTS; 17 AND UNDER BY AUDITION

JUL 28-AUG 2
JAZZ PIANO INTENSIVE
ADULTS 21 AND OVER BY AUDITION

SCAN QR CODE FOR DETAILS
STANFORDJAZZ.ORG

ALDO MAZZA

Getting that Cubano vibe at KoSA Cuba Workshop and Festival.

International Music Camp swings on the Canadian/U.S. border.

INTERNATIONAL

This trumpet denotes a corresponding ad in this guide.

David Becker Tuscany Guitar Camp

Tuscany, Italy

Aug. 10-17

Jazz, blues, bossa nova and looping — learn it all in a workshop with Grammy and Emmy nominated guitarist David Becker in beautiful Tuscany. Space is limited.

Faculty David Becker

Cost: €475.00 (without accommodation)

Contact: lauriedfriday@aol.com

International Music Camp Summer School of Fine Arts

International Peace Garden, Manitoba/North Dakota

July 14-20

Summer 2024 marks 67 years of inspiring music camps at the beautiful International Peace Gardens, located on the Canada/U.S. border between North Dakota and Manitoba, Canada. IMC offers a full-week session of jazz studies, including big band or vocal jazz streams along with jazz theory, improvisation, combos, faculty master classes and optional private lessons with IMC's acclaimed artist-teachers. This program is open to students completing grades 7-12 with at least three years of playing experience.

Faculty: A mixture of excellent post-secondary instructors in both Canada and the U.S.A. as well as experienced professional musicians

Cost: $630 (before May 1); $645 (after May 1); Add $20 for vocal jazz

Contact: info@internationalmusiccamp.com or call 204-269-8468 (Canada), 701-838-8472 (USA).

internationalmusiccamp.com

JazzWorks Canada Jazz Camp & Composers' Symposium/Practice Retreat

Quebec, Canada

Aug. 26-29, Composers' Symposium/Practice Retreat

Aug. 29-Sept. 1, Jazz Camp

An adult-focused, life-changing learning opportunity for vocalists and instrumentalists. Work on jazz theory and technique with JazzWorks' innovative Canadian and international jazz artist faculty. Share the joy of this intensive learning experience and immerse yourself in combo rehearsals, master classes, improvisation, jazz history, composition and arranging with nightly jam sessions and concerts. Check out the three-day Composers' Symposium/Practice Retreat on the website.

Faculty: Adrian Vedady, music director, bass; Dezron Douglas and Nat Reeves, bass; Kirk MacDonald, Don Braden and Ted Nash, saxophone; Amy London, voice; Derrick Gardner, trumpet; Lorne Lofsky, Roddy Ellias and Yotam Silberstein, guitar; Jean-Michel Pilc, piano; and many more

Cost: Visit jazzworkscanada.com/jazz-camp.html

Contact: jazz@jazzworkscanada.com or call 613-220-3819

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Joshua Breakstone's Jazz Guitar Dream Experience

Kyoto, Japan

June 25-July 3

A dream experience for guitarists of any age: nine nights, seven intensive, three-hour guitar workshops, visits to Japanese jazz clubs, intros to Japanese jazz musicians, five dinners in Kyoto restaurants with many of the musicians you'll meet, tours of Kyoto temples and gardens.

Faculty: Guitarist and educator Joshua Breakstone; Pianist and educator, Dr Phillip Strange; Bassist, Fukuro Kazuya; Drummer, Morishita Kei; Vocalist, Ito Aiko; and many additional special guests

Cost: April 15 Early Bird, $3,200; After April 15, $3,600; Limited to a maximum of eight participants

Contact: jzguitar212@gmail.com

kyotojazzguitarexperience.com

Keep an Eye Summer Jazz Workshop

Conservatorium van Amsterdam, The Netherlands

June 24-28

An advanced-level jazz workshop for professionals and students. This is your opportunity for networking and developing your skills by following an international summer course at one of Europe's most prominent jazz

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institutions. The workshop consists of daily combo and improvisation classes, instrument master classes (group/individual), electives and concerts/sessions in the evenings.

Faculty: Past faculty includes Aaron Parks (piano and ensembles), Ari Hoenig (drums and ensembles), Becca Stevens (voice), Ben Wendel (saxophone and ensembles), Dick Oatts (saxophone and ensembles), Jason Palmer (trumpet and ensembles), Jesse van Ruller (guitar), Lage Lund (guitar & ensembles), Matt Penman (double bass and ensembles), Michael Mayo (voice and ensembles), Seamus Blake (saxophone and ensembles), Theo Bleckmann (voice and ensembles), Tineke Postma (saxophone and ensembles) and more

Cost: €650

Contact: Anna-Maria Nitschke, summerjazz@ahk.nl or call +31205277550

conservatoriumvanamsterdam.nl/summerjazz

KoSA Cuba Workshop & Festival

Havana, Cuba

March 4-12

An annual one-week, hands-on, intensive, accredited study abroad program in Havana. Daily classes and seminars with Cuban masters, in-class playing, historical visits, VIP pass to all evening concerts of la Fiesta del Tambor (a Havana Rhythm and Dance Festival). Legal travel for U.S. citizens, all instruments provided. This music-and-culture program is open to musicians and music aficionados of all ages. Aldo Mazza is your host and facilitator. Experience real Cuba.

Faculty: Giraldo Piloto, Oliver Valdes, Panga, Adel Gonzales, Enrique Pla, Changuito, Dr. Olavo and more

Cost: $2,850 full land package, includes hotel, tuition meals, local transportation, VIP full festival access, Old Havana historic visits, translator & guide (Flight to Cuba not included)

Contact: info@kosamusic.com or call 1-800-541-8401

kosamusic.com

KoSA Italy (Calabria Retreat)

Petrizzi, Calabria, Italy

July 13-21

One-week musical and cultural retreat in Southern Italy. Enjoy this all-inclusive experience including daily hands-on music, rhythm and dance classes, seminars with International masters, international surprise guests, cultural deep dives, historical contexts, local culinary classes, language classes, perform and attend concerts at important archeological sites in hidden villages. All instruments provided.

Faculty: International faculty TBA, hosted by Aldo Mazza

Cost: $2,800

Contact: info@kosamusic.com or call 1-800-541-8401

kosamusic.com

Langnau Jazz Nights, Jazz Workshop

Langnau, Switzerland

July 22-27

The main goal of the workshop is to bring musicians together. Beside theoretical and practical classes with experienced teachers you also have the opportunity to meet jazz musicians from all over Switzerland and the world. You will improvise with them, exchange knowledge and share experiences with them, all of which make the Langnau Jazz Nights an unforgettable experience.

Faculty: Visit jazz-nights.ch

Cost: CHF 680; CHF 350 for students of a university of music (includes festival pass)

Contact: workshops@jazz-nights.ch

jazz-nights.ch

Langnau Jazz Nights, Junior Jazz Workshop

Langnau, Switzerland

July 22-27

The Junior Jazz Workshop for children and teenagers from 10-18 years of age is unique. Besides classes, which take into consideration age and skill level, the participants also have the opportunity to join the instrumental classes of the Jazz Workshop and special workshops of the performing bands. As a result participants get the chance to work with internationally acclaimed jazz musicians and teachers.

Faculty: Visit jazz-nights.ch

Cost: CHF 250 (includes festival pass)

Contact: workshops@jazz-nights.ch

jazz-nights.ch

Samba Meets Jazz Workshops

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Jan. 27-Feb. 3

This musical exchange welcomes instrumentalists and vocalists of all levels and musical backgrounds from around the world. The instrumental program integrates repertoire, Brazilian styles, ensemble work, improvisation and rhythmic studies. The vocal program focuses on repertoire, interpretation, Brazilian rhythms, phrasing and styles, Brazilian percussion and more. The schedule builds in ample time for participants to take advantage of Rio's rich cultural heritage, music and nightlife.

Faculty: Nilson Matta (artistic/music director), Liz Rosa, Alfredo Cardim, André Tandeta; Special guest presenter Nilza Carvalho & Choro band

Cost: Visit sambameetsjazz.com

Contact: alice@sambameetsjazz.com or call 917-620-8872 on WhatsApp

sambameetsjazz.com

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Blindfold Test 〉 BY DAN OUELLETTE

Bill O'Connell

In his first Blindfold Test, pianist and composer Bill O'Connell worried a bit about guessing artists correctly but quickly settled into a comfortable groove at the third annual Hamptons Jazz Festival. O'Connell is a stalwart of the fest, which, in its third year, is gaining traction during its four-month series of concerts at various venues. In the fest's inaugural year (2021), the Montauk, Long Island resident recorded his ninth Savant album, *Live In Montauk*, with a stellar lineup of tenor saxophonist Craig Handy, bassist Santi Debriano, drummer Billy Hart and guest trumpeter Randy Brecker. O'Connell warmed up the live session at LTV Studio by playing one of his Latin-inflected compositions on the piano: "Costa Verdes."

McCoy Tyner Trio

"Reaching Fourth" (*Reaching Fourth*, Impulse, 1992, rec'd 1962) Tyner, piano; Henry Grimes, bass; Roy Haynes, drums.

It's McCoy. This is "Reaching Fourth" with Roy Haynes on drums. What a fantastic record. This is from the great early period of McCoy. I love his lines, his harmonies. The playing is crystal clear: right on the mark. You can hear how he influenced Chick Corea. He's so articulate with every note in just the right place, and he's swinging hard with a strong melodic drive. When he went on to play with Coltrane, his music became more dense. McCoy is one of the greats of modern jazz. 5 stars.

Chucho Valdés

"Chucho's Mood" (*Jazz Batá 2*, Mack Avenue, 2018) Valdés, piano; Yelsy Heredia, bass; Dreiser Durruthy Bombalé, batás; Yaroldy Abreu, percussion.

Wow, this is something I've never heard. It feels like Eddie Palmieri, but that's not him. Maybe Chucho. It is? Anyone who knows my playing knows I love Latin music. Here Chucho is having so much fun. It's deeply rooted in the Afro-Cuban tradition, then he plays inside and outside not knowing where he's going until he gets there. The contrast between the rhythmic side and the melody is wonderful. This is freedom music at its best by Chucho, who has tremendous control of the piano.

Horace Silver

"The Cape Verdean Blues" (*The Cape Verdean Blues*, Blue Note, 2004, rec'd 1965) Silver, piano; Wood Shaw, trumpet, J.J. Johnson, trombone; Joe Henderson, tenor saxophone; Bob Cranshaw, bass; Roger Humphries, drums.

"Cape Verdean Blues." I played with Conrad Herwig's Latin Side and we focused on Horace's music. This is such a great tune to play. What beauties he wrote. He's a composer, which is something these days that's not fully touched upon. Everybody plays Horace's songs. He's been such an influence. His music has rhythm that keeps the blues in its roots. There's a sparseness in his music, but his piano is always so present with his left-hand rhythm so unique. This is joyful music.

Andrew Hill

"Hattie" (*Nefertiti*, West Wind/Test Of Times Records, 1976) Hill, piano; Richard Davis, bass; Roger Blank, drums.

I don't know this music, but I like it. I like the vibe. It sounds like it was a lot of fun playing. I'd love to drop into something like this. They were going anywhere, grooving in their own ways. Not in a traditional sense. It wasn't so much melodic, but it was percussive with the piano player plunking here and there. You think of Monk, but this is in a major register and sounds much happier than Monk. It's Andrew Hill? I checked him out when he recorded a couple of records for Blue Note. This tune makes sense with Andrew's rhythmic approach.

COURTESY BILL O'CONNELL

"He changed the way people approach the jazz trio," Bill O'Connell said of his main incluence, pianist Bill Evans.

Herbie Hancock

"The Sorcerer" (*The Essential Herbie Hancock*, Columbia, 2006, rec'd 1968) Hancock, piano; Ron Carter, bass; Mickey Roker, drums.

Herbie and "The Sorcerer" with Ron Carter on bass and I think Tony Williams on drums. No? Mickey Roker sounds good. If I were stranded on a desert island, I would want this tune to be with me. When I think of all the modern jazz pianists who have influenced me, Herbie is at the top — not just with his piano technique but having the most impact on my soul. This sounds so fresh and so modern. 5 stars.

Tania Giannouli

"Intone" (*Solo*, Rattle Music) Giannouli, piano, effects.

Wow, I don't know who this is, but I like the composition a lot. We're jazz musicians, so I think we're always looking to bring different elements into the music. Clearly the opening of this piece of music is kind of classical, which I liked, but then the music locked into a groove that doesn't fit into a category. Then it got crazy, but that's part of life. It's not always melodic and beautiful. You need to express different elements, complicated points of view that don't fit in a box. As for the pianist playing inside the box itself, I liked the melodic element. It got me moving.

Ahmad Jamal

"Flight" (*The Essence, Part 1*, Verve, 1995) Jamal, piano; James Cammack, bass; Idris Muhammad, drums; Manolo Badrena, percussion.

I feel totally stumped. But I heard this pianist influenced by Ahmad Jamal. It is Ahmad? That's what I thought, but then I thought that it's maybe too far out for him. I can hear him. His use of space has a lot of earth to it. There are changes and then he takes over. Clearly, he has full command of the piano and takes it wherever he wants to go. He stretches out rhythmically with a nice ostinato in the bass. It's such a different approach to a piano trio and so in tune with the dynamics that are possible.

Bill Evans/Jim Hall

"I'm Getting Sentimental Over You" (*Undercurrent*, Blue Note, 1988, rec'd 1962) Evans, piano; Hall, guitar.

Obviously. Bill Evans and Jim Hall. Bill is my main influence. He plays one note and you know it's him — great harmonies and rhythmic ideas. He changed the way people approach the jazz trio. With Jim, the way they played made for having a lot of space. They were so in tune with each other, every note just works. It's a beautiful but rare thing when you link up with another musician in this way. You've got to cherish those relationships. 5 stars easily. **DB**

The "Blindfold Test" is a listening test that challenges the featured artist to discuss and identify the music and musicians who performed on selected recordings. The artist is then asked to rate each tune using a 5-star system. No information is given to the artist prior to the test.

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